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REALISTIC

"THE ORDEAL"

By CHARLES EGBERT CRADDOCK

AUTHOR OF

"THE FAIR MISSISSIPPIAN,"

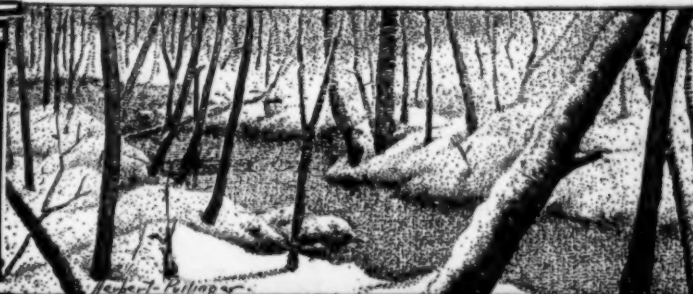
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THE ORDEAL

BY

CHARLES EGBERT CRADDOCK

Author of "The Fair Mississippian," "The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains," etc.

I.

NOWHERE could the idea of peace be more serenely, more majestically, expressed. The lofty purple mountains limited the horizon, and in their multitude and imposing symmetry bespoke the vast intentions of beneficent creation. The valley, glooming low, harbored all the shadows. The air was still, the sky as pellucid as crystal, and where a crag projected boldly from the forests, the growths of balsam fir extending almost to the brink, it seemed as if the myriad fibres of the summit-line of foliage might be counted, so finely drawn, so individual, was each against the azure. Below the boughs the road swept along the crest of the crag and thence curved inward, and one surveying the scene from the windows of a bungalow at no great distance could look straight beyond the point of the precipice and into the heart of the sunset, still aflame about the west.

But the realization of solitude was poignant and might well foster fear. It was too wild a country, many people said, for quasi-strangers, and the Briscoes were not justified in lingering so long at their summer cottage here in the Great Smoky Mountains after the hotel of the neighboring springs was closed for the season, and its guests and employees all vanished townward. Hitherto, however, the Briscoes had flouted the suggestion, protesting that this and not the spring was the "sweet o' the year." The autumn always found the fires flaring on the cosy hearths of their pretty bungalow, and they were wont to gaze entranced on the chromatic pageantry of the forests as the season waned. Presently the

Indian summer would steal upon them unawares, with its wild sweet airs, the burnished glimmers of its soft red sun, its dreamy, poetic, amethystine haze. Now, too, came the crowning opportunity of sylvan sport. There were deer to stalk and to course with horses, hounds, and horns; wild turkeys and mountain grouse to try the aim and tax the pedestrianism of the hunter; bears had not yet gone into winter quarters, and were mast-fed and fat; even a shot at a wolf, slyly marauding, was no infrequent incident, and Edward Briscoe thought the place in autumn an elysium for a sportsman.

He had to-day the prospect of a comrade in these delights from his own city home and of his own rank in life, despite the desertion of the big frame hotel on the bluff, but it was not the enticements of rod and gun that had brought Julian Bayne suddenly and unexpectedly to the mountains. His host and cousin, Edward Briscoe, was his co-executor in a kinsman's will, and in the settlement of the estate the policy of granting a certain power of attorney necessitated a conference more confidential than could be safely compassed by correspondence. They discussed this as they sat in the spacious reception hall, and had Bayne been less preoccupied he must have noticed at once the embarrassment, nay, the look of absolute dismay, with which Briscoe had risen to receive him, when, unannounced, he appeared in the doorway as abruptly as if he had fallen from the clouds. As it was, the brief colloquy on the business interests that had brought him hither was almost concluded before the problem of his host's manner began to intrude on Bayne's consciousness. Briscoe's broad, florid, genial countenance expressed an unaccountable disquietude; a flush had mounted to his forehead, which was elongated by his premature baldness; he was pulling nervously at his long dark mustache, which matched in tint the silky fringe of hair encircling his polished crown; his eyes, round and brown, and glossy as a chestnut, wandered inattentively. He did not contend on small points of feasibility, according to his wont, for he was of an argumentative habit of mind—in fact, his acquiescence in every detail proposed was so complete and so unexpected that Bayne, with half his urgency unsaid, came to the end of his proposition with as precipitate an effect as if he had stumbled upon it in the dark.

"Well, that's agreed, is it? Easily settled! I really need not have come—though"—with a complaisant after-thought—"it is a pleasure to look in on you in your woodland haunts."

Briscoe suddenly leaned forward from his easy chair and laid his hand on his cousin's knee.

"Julian," he said anxiously, "I hate to tell you—but my wife has got that woman here."

Bayne stared, blankly unresponsive. "What woman?" he asked wonderingly.

"Mrs. Royston, you know—Lillian Marable, that was."

Bayne looked as if suddenly checked in headlong speed—startled, almost stunned. The blood rushed in a tumultuous flood to his thin cheeks, then receded, leaving his face mottled red and white. His steel-gray eyes suddenly glowed like hot metal. There was a moment of tense silence; then he said, his voice steady and controlled, his manner stiff but not without dignity, "Pray do not allow that to discompose you. She is nothing to me."

"I know—I know, of course. I would not have mentioned it, but I feared an unexpected meeting might embarrass you, here in this seclusion where you cannot avoid each other."

"You need not have troubled yourself," Bayne protested, looking fixedly at his cigar as he touched off the long ash with a delicate fillip.

There was a great contrast in the aspect of the two, which accorded with their obvious differences of mind and temperament: Briscoe, a man of wealth and leisure, portly and rubicund, in his hunting togs, with gaiters, knickers, jacket, and negligee shirt, while Bayne, with no trace of the disorder incident to a long journey in primitive methods of transportation, was as elaborately groomed and as accurately costumed in his trig, dark brown, business suit as if he had just stepped from the elevator of the sky-scraper where his offices as a broker were located. His manner distinctly intimated that the subject was dismissed, but Briscoe, who had as kindly a heart as ever beat, was nothing of a diplomat. He set forth heavily to justify himself.

"You see—knowing that you were once in love with her——"

"Oh, no, my dear fellow," Bayne hastily interrupted; "I never loved *her*. I loved only my own dream of one fair woman. It did not come true, that's all."

Briscoe seemed somewhat reassured, but in the pervasive awkwardness of his plight as host of both parties he could not quit the subject. "Just so," he acquiesced gladly; "a mere dream—and a dream can make no sensible man unhappy."

Bayne laughed with a tense note of satire. "Well, the awakening was a rude jar, I must confess."

For it had been no ordinary termination of an unhappy love affair. It befell within a fortnight of the date set for the prospective marriage. All the details of publicity were complete: the cards were out; the "society columns" of the local journals had revelled in the plans of the event; the gold and silver shower of the bridal presents was raining down. The determining cause of the catastrophe was never quite clear to the community—whether a lover's quarrel with disproportionate consequences, by reason of the marplot activities of a mercenary relative of the lady's, advocating the interests of a sudden opportunity of greater wealth and station; or her foolish revenge for a fancied slight; or simply her sheer inconstancy in a change of mind and heart. At all events, without a word of warning, Julian Bayne, five years before, had the unique experi-

ence of reading in a morning paper the notice of the marriage of his promised bride to another man, and of sustaining with what grace he might the rôle of a jilted lover amidst the ruins of his nuptial preparations.

In the estimation of the judicious, he had made a happy escape, for the cruelty involved in the lady's methods and the careless flout of the opinion of the sober, decorous world were not *indicia* of worthy traits; but he was of sensitive fibre, and tingled and winced with the consciousness of the cheap gibe and the finger of scorn. He often said to himself then, however, as now to the friend of his inmost thought, "I would not be bound to a woman capable of such treachery for——"

Words failed him, inadequate, though he spoke calmly. His face had resumed its habitual warm pallor. His clear-cut features, something too sharply defined for absolute regularity, with the unassertive effect of his straight auburn hair, his deliberate, contemplative glance, his reserved, high-bred look, the quiet decorum of his manner, were not suggestive of the tumult of his inner consciousness, and the unresponsiveness of his aspect baffled Briscoe. With some inapposite, impulsive warmth he protested: "But she has had bitter cause for repentance, Julian. Royston was a brute. The only decent thing he ever did was dying! She has been an awfully unhappy woman. I know you will be sorry for that."

"Neither glad nor sorry. She is nothing to me. Not because she dealt me a blow after a very unfair fashion, but because she is nothing in herself that I could really care for. She has no delicate sensibilities, no fine perceptions; she is incapable of constancy. Don't you understand? She has no capacity to feel."

Briscoe had a look of extenuating distress—a sentiment of loyalty to his fair guest. "Oh, well, now, she is devoted to her child—a most loving mother."

"Certainly, she may grow in grace—let us hope that she will! And now suppose we talk a little about that wonderful magazine shot-gun you have so often offered to lend me. This is my chance to prove its values,—the only time in the last five years that I could spare a week from the office."

He rose and turned with his easy, lithe grace toward the gun-rack, but Briscoe sat still in pondering dismay. For it was obvious that Julian Bayne had no intention of soon relaxing the tension of the situation by the elimination of the presence of the jilted lover. Pride, indeed, forbade his flight. His self-respect clamored for recognition. There was no cause for humiliation in his consciousness, and he could not consent to abase himself before the untoward and discordant facts. He did not disguise from himself, however, that, if he might have chosen earlier, he would have avoided the ordeal of the meeting, from which he shrank in anticipation. Already he was poignantly conscious of the heavy draughts it made on his composure, and he raged inwardly to note

how his fingers trembled as he stood before the rack of guns, now and again a weapon in his hands, feigning an interest in examining the construction first of one and then of another.

The entire place suggested a devotion to sport and whole-souled hospitality. The vast spread of the autumnal landscape, in wonderful clarity and depth of tint, was visible through the large, open front doors. There was an effort to maintain in this apartment the aspect in some sort of a lodge in the wilderness; the splendid antlers over the mantel-piece, beneath which, in a deep stone chimney-place, a fire of logs smouldered; the golden eagle, triumph of taxidermy, poisoning his wings full-spread above the landing of the somewhat massive staircase; the rack of weapons—rifles, shot-guns, hunting-knives, game-bags; the decoration of the walls, showing the mask and brush of many a fox, and the iridescent wings of scores of wild-fowl; the rugs scattered about made of the pelts of wolves, catamounts, and bears of the region—all served to contribute to the sylvan effect. But the glisten of the hardwood floors, waxed and polished; the luxury of the easy chairs and sofas; the centre-table strewn with magazines and papers, beneath a large lamp of rare and rich ware; the delicate aroma of expensive cigars, were of negative, if not discordant, suggestion, and bespoke the more sophisticated proclivities and training of the owner.

In the interval of awkward silence, Briscoe sat motionless in his easy chair, a rueful reflectiveness on his genial face incongruous with its habitual expression. When a sudden disconcerted intentness developed upon it, Bayne, every instinct on the alert, took instant heed of the change. The obvious accession of dismay betokened the increasing acuteness of the crisis, and Briscoe's attitude, as of helpless paralysis, stricken as it were into stone as he gazed toward the door, heralded an approach.

There were light footfalls on the veranda, a sudden shadow at the door. The next moment two ladies were entering, their hands full of autumn leaves, trophies of their long walk. Bayne, summoning to his aid all the conservative influences of pride and self-respect, was able to maintain an aspect of grave composure as, fully warned, he turned to meet them. Nevertheless, the element of surprise to the new-comers rendered it an awkward moment to all the group. Mrs. Briscoe, considerably in advance of her guest, paled at the sight of him, and, silent and visibly shocked, paused as abruptly as if she beheld a ghost. It was a most uncharacteristic reception, for she was of a gracious and engaging personality and a stately type of beauty. She was tall and graceful, about thirty years of age, in full bloom, so to speak, extremely fair, the delicacy of her complexion enhanced by the contrast with her dark hair worn *en pompadour*. Her gown of dark red cloth, elaborately braided and with narrow borders of otter fur, had a rich depth of color which accorded with her sumptuous endowments.

The rôle of cordial hostess she was wont to play with especial acceptability, but now she had lost its every line, its most trivial patter. She said not one word as Bayne clasped her hand with the conventional greeting, but only looked at him with her hazel eyes at once remonstrant, pleading, compassionate.

The moment of vantage, short as it was, afforded by the precedence of her hostess in the matter of salutation, gave Mrs. Royston the opportunity to catch her breath and find her voice. She had not seen this man since, five years ago, he had left her home her expectant bridegroom. But beyond a fluctuating flush in her fair cheek, a dilation of her blue eyes, a flutter of those eyelids which he had always esteemed a special point of her beauty, being so smooth, so full, so darkly lashed, she conserved an ostensible calm, although she felt the glance of his eye as sensitively as red hot steel. But he—as he dropped the hand of his hostess and advanced toward her guest—in one moment his fictitious composure deserted him. For this was not the widow in weeds whom he had expected to see, not the woman of whom he had trained himself to think, when he must needs think of her at all, as another man's wife. This was his own fair Past, the unfulfilled promise of his future, the girl he had adored, the ideal wife whom he had worshipped in his cherished dreams! Just as always heretofore, she stood now, so fresh, so fair, so candid-seeming, wearing her white serge gown with her usual distinction, a spray of golden-rod fastened in her mass of yellow hair that glowed with a sheen of differing gold. How had Time spared her! How had griefs left her scathless! It was an effort to reflect that two years and more had elapsed since he had read the obituary of Archibald Royston, with scornful amusement to mark the grotesque lie to the living in the fulsome tribute to the dead.

In some sort, Bayne was prepared for change, for the new identity that the strange falling out of events betokened. He had never realized her, he had never divined her character, he would have said. She was now, as she had always been, an absolute stranger. But this little hand—ah, he knew it well! How often it had lain in his clasp, and once more every fibre thrilled at its touch. With all his resolution, he could not restrain the flush that mounted to his brow, the responsive quiver in his voice as he murmured her name, the name of Archibald Royston's wife, so repugnant to his lips. He was in a state of revolt against himself, his self-betrayal, to realize that she and the two Briscoes could not fail to mark his confusion, attributing his emotion to whatsoever cause they would. Indeed, in the genial altruism of his host, Briscoe had succeeded in breaking from the thrall of embarrassment to shield and save the situation.

"Why, here is Archie!" he exclaimed resonantly. "How are *you*, old man?" His clear tones were vibrant with disproportionate elation at the prospect of a diversion of the painful interest of the scene.

For at the moment a fine blonde boy of three years burst in at the rear door of the apartment and came running to meet Mrs. Royston, just apprised, doubtless, of her return from her afternoon stroll. He looked very fresh in his white linen dress, his red leather belt, and twinkling red shoes. With the independent nonchalance of childhood, he took no note of the outstretched arms and blandishing smile of Mr. Briscoe, who sought to intercept him, but made directly toward his mother. His gleaming reflection sped along in the polished, mirroring floor, but all at once both semblance and substance paused. With a sudden thought the child put his dimpled hands over his smiling pink face, while his blue eyes danced merrily between the tips of his fingers. Then he advanced again, lunging slowly along, uttering the while a menacing "Mew! Mew! Mew!"

His mother had no heart for his fun. She could scarcely summon the strength and attention requisite for this fantastic infantile foolery when all her capacities were enlisted to support her dignity in the presence of this man, necessarily inimical, censorious, critical, who had once meant so much in her life. But she could not rebuff the baby! She would not humble his spirit! She must enter into his jest, whatever the effort cost her.

It was poor acting certainly. She affected fright, as the child expected. She cowered dismayed. "Oh, oh!" she cried, watching his erratic approach. "What is that?" She pretended flight, but sank into a chair, apparently overpowered. She gazed down at the child with the lifted hands of horror as he clasped the folds of her gown, his eyes shining with fun, his teeth glittering between his red lips, his laughter rippling with delight. "Me scared oo, Mamma," he squealed ecstatically. "Oo did n't know what me was. Oo t'ought me was a gate big bear."

Whereupon she looked down at him as with amazed recognition. "Is it you, Archie? Dear me, I thought it was a great big bear."

"Mew! Mew! Mew!" he repeated in joy.

"Why, Archie, old man, bears don't mew!" cried the genial Briscoe, recovering his equanimity. "Bears *growl*—did n't you know that?"

He straightway began to teach the little fellow a very noisy and truculent vocalization of the ursine type, which Archie, who was a great favorite with his host, eagerly imitated, Briscoe appearing throughout the duet at the pitiable disadvantage of the adult imbecile disporting himself in infantile wise.

The tumult of the child's entrance had the effect of relaxing for Briscoe the tension of the situation, but when Archie's nurse appeared at the door and he ran away at her summons, the host looked apprehensively about the circle as the party ranged themselves around the fire, its glow beginning to be welcome in the increasing chill of the evening. Ordinarily, this was a household of hilarious temperament. Life had

been good to the Briscoes, and they loved it. They were fond of rich viands, old wines, genial talk, good stories, practical jests, music, and sport; the wife herself being more than a fair shot, a capital whip, and a famous horsewoman. Even when there was no stranger within the gates, the fires would flare merrily till midnight, the old songs echo, and the hours speed away on winged sandals. But this evening neither host nor hostess could originate a sentence in the presence of what seemed to their sentimental persuasions the awful tragedy of two hearts. Indeed, conversation on ordinary lines would have been impossible, but that Bayne with an infinite self-confidence, as it seemed to Mrs. Briscoe, took the centre of the stage and held it. All Bayne's spirit was up! The poise and reserve of his nature, his habit of sedulous self-control, were reasserted. He could scarcely forgive himself their momentary lapse. He felt it insupportable that he should not have held his voice to normal steadiness, his pulses to their wonted calm, in meeting again this woman who had wrought him such signal injury, who had put upon him such insufferable indignity. Surely he could feel naught for her but the rancor she had earned! From the beginning, she had been all siren, all deceit. She was but the semblance, the figment, of his foolish dream, and why should the dream move him still, shattered as it was by the torturing realities of the truth? Why must he needs bring tribute to her powers, flatter her ascendancy in his life, by faltering before her casual presence? He rallied all his forces. He silently swore a mighty oath that he at least would take note of his own dignity, that he would deport himself with a due sense of his meed of self-respect. Though with a glittering eye and a strong flush on his cheek, he conserved a deliberate incidental manner, and maintained a pose of extreme interest in his own prelection as, seated in an arm-chair before the fire, he began to talk with a very definite intention of a quiet self-assertion, of absorbing and controlling the conversation. He described at great length the incidents of his trip hither, and descanted on the industrial and political conditions of east Tennessee. This brought him by an easy transition to an analysis of the peculiar traits of its mountain population, which included presently their individual idiosyncrasies of speech. When he was fairly launched on this theme, which was of genuine interest to him, for he had long fostered a linguistic fad, all danger of awkward silence or significant pauses was eliminated. He found that Briscoe could furnish him with some fresh points in comparative philology, to his surprise and gratification, for he never expected aught bookish of his host. But like men of his type, Briscoe was a close observer and learned of the passing phase of life. He took issue again and again with the deductions of the traveller.

"You think it queer that they use 'you-uns' in the singular number? Then why do you use 'you' in the singular number? I have n't heard

you 'thou-ing' around here this evening. Just as grammatical in that respect as you are! And on the same principle, why do you say 'you were' to me instead of 'you was,' which would be more singular—ha, ha, ha."

"What I think so curious is the double-barrelled pronouns themselves, 'you-uns' and 'we-uns.'" Mrs. Royston forced herself to take part in the colloquy at the first opportunity.

"Not at all queer," Bayne promptly contended. "The correlatives of that locution appear in other languages. The French has *nous autres*, the Italians, *noi altri*, the Spanish, *nosotros*."

"And pray consider our own classical 'we-all,'" Mrs. Briscoe gayly interposed, surprised that she could pluck up the spirit for this interruption.

"More interesting to me is the survival in this sequestered region of old English words and significations, altogether obsolete elsewhere," continued Bayne. "Now, when I asked the driver yesterday the name of a very symmetrical eminence in the midst of the ranges he said it had no name, that it was no mountain—it was just the 'moniment' of a little ridge, meaning the image, the simulacrum. This is Spenser's usage."

"Look here, Julian," said Briscoe, rising suddenly, all his wonted bluff self again, "if you fire off any more of your philologic wisdom at us I'll throw you over the cliff. We are skilled in the *use* of words—honest, straight talk—not their dissection. I want to get at something that we can all enjoy. Tune this violin and come and play some of those lovely old things that you and Gladys used to practise together."

"Yes, yes, indeed," exclaimed Mrs. Briscoe cordially, and, rising promptly, she approached the piano.

Briscoe also started toward the instrument, to open it for her. "Mrs. Royston and I will be a generous audience and applaud enthusiastically. But stop—what is that?"

He suddenly paused, the lid of the piano half lifted in his hands, the scattered sheet music falling in a rustling shower to the floor.

"What is that?" he reiterated, motionless and hearkening.

II.

A VOICE was calling from out the rising mists, calling again and again, hailing the house. Briscoe dropped the lid of the piano and strode to the door, followed by Bayne, the ladies standing irresolute on the hearth-rug and gazing apprehensively after them.

The sudden changes incident to the mountain atmosphere were evidenced in the opaque density of the fog that had ensued on the crystalline clearness of the sunset. It hung like a curtain from the zenith to the depths of the valley, obscuring all the world. It had climbed the cliffs;

it was shifting in and out among the pillars of the veranda; it even crossed the threshold as the door was opened, then shrank back ghostly-wise, dissolving at the touch of the warm home radiance. As the lamp-light flickered out, illumining its pervasive pallor, the new-comer urged a very lame horse to the steps of the veranda. The two friends waiting within looked at each other in uncertainty as to their policy in admitting the stranger. Then as his rapid footfalls sounded on the veranda, and a stalwart figure appeared in the doorway, Briscoe tilted the shade of the lamp on the table to throw its glare full on the new-comer's face. Instantly he broke forth with an acclaim of recognition and welcome.

To be sure, he was but a casual acquaintance, and Briscoe's cordiality owed something of its fervor to his relief to find that the visitor was of no untoward antecedents and intentions. An old school-fellow he had been long ago in their distant city home, who chanced to be in the mountains on a flying trip—no belated summer sojourner, no pleasure-seeker, but concerned with business, and business of the grimmest monitions. A brisk, breezy presence he had, his cheeks tingling red from the burning of the wind and sun and the speed of his ride. He was tall and active, thirty-five years of age perhaps, with a singularly keen eye and an air intimating much decision of character, of which he stood in need for he was a deputy collector of the revenue service, and in the midst of a dangerous moonshining raid his horse had gone dead lame.

"I hardly expected to find you still here at this season," he said to Briscoe, congratulating himself, "but I took the chances. You must lend me a horse."

Briscoe's instincts of hospitality were paramount, and he declared that he would not allow the new-comer to depart so summarily. He must stay and dine; he must stay the night; he must join the hunt that was planned for to-morrow—a first-rate gun was at his disposal.

"I'll get you back to Glaston without delay. I'll let you drive the dog-cart with Fairy-foot, the prettiest bit of horse-flesh that ever wore a shoe—trots to beat the band! You can hunt all day with Bayne and me, and a little before sunset you can start for Shaftesville, and she will whisk you there in an hour and a half, twenty miles. You need n't start till five o'clock to catch the seven-ten train, with lots of time to spare."

In spite of all denial, the telephone bell was presently jangling as Briscoe rang up the passenger-agent at the railroad depot in the little town of Shaftesville, twenty miles away.

"Twenty-six—yes, Central, I *did* say twenty-six! . . . Hello, Tucker, is that you? . . . See here—Mr. Frank Dean will be there with the dog-cart and Fairy-foot to-morrow evening to catch the seven-ten train for Glaston—leaves here about an hour by sun. Will you do me the favor to hire a responsible party there to bring the mare back?

. . . Can't spare a man from here. Lost two of my dogs—yes, my fine, full-blooded hounds—you remember Damon and Pythias? Strayed off from the pack, and all hands and the cook have got to get out straightway and hunt them. Wolves—awfully afraid they will get the hounds. Outnumber them and pull them down—fierce at this season.

. . . Yes, I hope so! You'll look out for Fairy-foot? . . . Thanks, awfully. . . . Yes, *he* would do,—careful fellow! Tell him to drive slowly coming back. Dean will race her down there at the top of her speed. (Hush up, Frank, I know what I am talking about.) Mr. Dean will be there all right. Thank you very much. Do as much for you some day. Goo'-by."

But Dean's protests were serious. His duties admitted of no trifling. He wanted no such superfine commodity as Fairy-foot, but a horse stout and sound he must have to-night and the favor of leaving his disabled steed in Briscoe's stable. He explained as he took his seat at the dinner-table that his misfortune in laming the horse and the fog combined had separated him from the revenue posse just out from a secluded cove, where his men had discovered and raided an illicit distillery in a cavern, cutting the copper still and worm to bits, demolishing the furnace and fermenters, the flake-stand and thumper, destroying considerable store of mash and beer and singlings, and seizing and making off with a barrel of the completed product. A fine and successful adventure it might have seemed, but there were no arrests. The moonshiners had fled the vicinity. For aught the officer had to show for it, the "wild-cat" was a spontaneous production of the soil. He made himself very merry over this phase of the affair, when seated at the prettily appointed dinner table of the bungalow, and declared that however the marshal might regard the matter, he could not call it a "water-haul."

The repast concluded, he insisted that he must needs be immediately in the saddle again. He scarcely stayed for a puff of an after-dinner cigar, and when he had bidden the ladies adieu both Bayne and Briscoe went with him to the stable, to assist in the selection of a horse suited to his needs. Little Archie ran after them, begging to be admitted to their company. Briscoe at once caught him up to his shoulder, and there he was perched, wisely overlooking the choice of an animal sound and fresh and strong as the three men made the tour from stall to stall, preceded by a brisk negro groom, swinging a lantern to show the points of each horse under discussion.

In three minutes the revenue officer, mounted once more, tramped out into the shivering mists and the black night. The damp fallen leaves deadened the sound of departing hoofs; the obscurities closed about him, and he vanished from the scene, leaving not a trace of his transitory presence.

Briscoe lingered in the stable, finding a jovial satisfaction in the

delight of little Archie in the unaccustomed experience, for the child had the time of his life that melancholy sombre night in the solitudes of the great mountains. His stentorian shouts and laughter were as bluff as if he were ten years old, and as boisterous as if he were drunk besides. Briscoe had perched him on the back of a horse, where he feigned to ride at breakneck speed, and his cries of "Gee!" "Dullup!" "G'long!" rang out imperiously in the sad, murky atmosphere and echoed back, shrilly sweet, from the great crags. The stable lantern showed him thus gallantly mounted, against the purple and brown shadows of the background, his white linen frock clasped low by his red leather belt, his cherubic legs, with his short half hose and his red shoes, sticking stiffly out at an angle of forty-five degrees, his golden curls blowing high on his head, his face pink with joy and laughter. The light shone too in the big, astonished eyes of the fine animal he bestrode, now and then turning his head inquisitively toward Briscoe—who stood close by with a cautious grasp on the skirts of the little boy—as if wondering to feel the clutch of the infantile hands on his mane and the tempestuous beat of the little feet as Archie cried out his urgency to speed.

Archie would not willingly have relinquished this joy till dawn, and the problem how to get him peaceably off the horse became critical. He had repeatedly declined to dismount when at length a lucky inspiration visited Briscoe. The amiable host called for an ear of corn, and with this he lured the little horseman to descend, in order to feed a "poor pig" represented as in the last stages of famine and dependent solely on the ministrations of the small guest. Here renewed delights expanded, for the "poor pig" became lively and almost "gamesome," being greatly astonished by the light and men and the repast at this hour of the night. As he was one of those gourmands who decline no good thing, he affably accepted Archie's offering, so graciously indeed that the little fellow called for another ear of corn more amply to relieve the porcine distresses, the detail of which had much appealed to his tender heart. It seemed as if the choice of the good Mr. Briscoe lay between the fiction of riding a race all night or playing the Samaritan to the afflicted pig, when in the midst of Archie's noisy beatitudes sleep fell upon him unaware, like a thief in the night. As he waited for the groom to reappear with the second relay of refreshments, Briscoe felt the tense little body in his clasp grow limp and collapse; the eager head with its long golden curls drooped down on his shoulder; the shout, already projected on the air, quavered and failed midway, giving place to a deep-drawn sigh, and young Royston was fairly eclipsed for the night, translated doubtless to an unexplored land of dreams where horses and pigs and revenue officers and mountains ran riot together "in much admired disorder." Briscoe bore him tenderly in his arms to the house, and, after transferring him to his nurse, rejoined with Bayne the ladies in the hall.

Here they found a change of sentiment prevailing. Although failing in no observance of courtesy, Mrs. Briscoe had been a little less than complaisant toward the departed guest. This had been vaguely perceptible to Briscoe at the time, but now she plainly spoke her mind.

"I don't see why you should have asked him to dine," she said to her husband. "He was difficult to persuade, and only your urgency constrained him."

Her face was uncharacteristically petulant and anxious as she stood on the broad hearth at one side of the massive mantel-piece, one hand lifted to the high shelf; her red cloth gown with the amber-tinted gleams of the lines of otter fur showed richly in the blended light of fire and lamp. Her gaze seemed to shrink from the window, at which nevertheless she glanced ever and anon.

"I delight in the solitude here, and I have never felt afraid, but I think that, since this disastrous raid, that revenue officer is in danger in this region from the moonshiners, and that his presence at our house will bring enmity on us. It really makes me apprehensive. It was not prudent to entertain him, and certainly not at all necessary—it was almost against his will, in fact."

"Well, well, he is gone now," returned Briscoe easily, lifting the lid of the piano and dropping down on the stool before it, but she would not quit the subject.

"While you two were at the stable I thought I heard a step on the veranda—you need not laugh—Lillian heard it as well as I. Then, when you were so long coming back, I went upstairs to get a little shawl to send out to you to put over Archie as you came across the yard—the mists are so dank—and I saw—I am *sure* I saw—just for a minute—a light flicker from the hotel across the ravine."

Briscoe, his hands crashing out involuntarily a discordant chord, looked over his shoulder with widening eyes. "Why, Gladys, there is not a soul in the hotel now!"

"That is why the light there seemed so strange."

"Besides, you know, you *could n't* have seen a light for the mists."

"The mists were shifting; they rose and then closed in again. Ask Lillian—she happened to be standing at the window there, and she said she saw the stars for a few moments."

"*Now, now, now!*" exclaimed Briscoe remonstrantly, rising and coming toward the hearth. "You two are trying to get up a panic, which means that this delicious season in the mountains is at an end for us, and we must go back to town. Why can't you understand that Mrs. Royston saw the stars and perhaps a glimpse of the moon, and that then you both saw the glimmer of their reflection on the glass of the windows at the vacant hotel. Is there anything wonderful in that? I appeal to Julian."

"I don't know anything about the conditions here, but certainly that explanation sounds very plausible. As to the step on the veranda, Ned and I can take our revolvers and ascertain if any one is prowling about."

The proposition appealed to Mrs. Briscoe, and she was grateful for the suggestion, since it served, however illogically, to soothe her nerves. She looked at Bayne very kindly when he came in with his host, from the dripping densities of the fog, his face shining like marble with the pervasive moisture, his pistol in his hand, declaring that there was absolutely nothing astir. But indeed there was more than kind consideration in Mrs. Briscoe's look; there was question, speculation, an accession of interest, and he was quick to note an obvious, though indefinable, change in Mrs. Royston's eyes as they rested upon him. She had spent the greater portion of the evening tête-à-tête with her hostess, the men being with the horses. He was suddenly convinced that meantime he had been the theme of conversation between the two, and—the thought appalled him!—Mrs. Briscoe had persuaded her friend that to see again the woman who had enthralled him of yore was the lure that had brought him so unexpectedly to this solitude of the mountains. His object was a matter of business, they had been told, to be sure, but "business" is an elastic and comprehensive term, and in fact, in view of the convenience of mail facilities, it might well cloak a subterfuge. Naturally, the men had not divulged to the women the nature of the business, more especially since it concerned the integrity of a certain prospective attorney, in fact. This interpretation of his stay Bayne had not foreseen for one moment. His whole being revolted against the assumption—that he should languish again at the feet of this traitress; that he should open once more his heart to be the target of her poisonous arrows; that he should drag his pride, his honest self-respect, in the dust of humiliation! How could they be so dull, so dense, as to harbor such a folly? The thought stung him with an actual venom; it would not let him sleep; and when toward dawn he fell into a troubled stupor, half waking, half dreaming, the torpid state was so pervaded with her image, the sound of her voice, that he wrested himself from it with a conscious wrench and rose betimes, doubtful if, in the face of this preposterous persuasion, he could so command his resolution as to continue his stay as he had planned.

III.

ON descending the stairs, Bayne found the fire newly alight in the hall, burning with that spare, clear brilliancy that the recent removal of ashes imparts to a wood fire. All the world was still beclouded with mists, and the windows and doors looked forth on a blank white nullity—as inexpressive, as enigmatical, as the unwritten page of the unformulated future itself. The present seemed eliminated; he stood as it

were in the atmosphere of other days. But whither had blown the incense of that happy time? The lights on the shrine had dwindled to extinction! What had befallen his strong young hopes, his faith, his inspiration, that they had exhaled and left the air vapid and listless. He was conscious that he was no more the man who used to await her coming, expectant, his eyes on the door. He had now scarcely a pulse in common with that ardent young identity he remembered as himself—his convictions of the nobler endowments of human nature; his candid unreserve with his fellows; his aspirations toward a fair and worthy future; his docile, sweet, almost humble content with such share of the good things of this life as had been vouchsafed him; his strength, as "with the strength of ten," to labor night and day with the impetus of his sanctified impulses; but, above all, his love, that had consecrated his life, his love for this woman whom he believed—poor young fool!—loved him. How could five years work such change? World-worn he was and a-weary, casuistic, cautious, successful in a sort as the logical result of the exercise of sound commercial principles and more than fair abilities, but caring less and less for success since its possession had only the inherent values of gain and was hallowed by no sweet and holy expectation of bestowal. He could have wept for the metamorphosis! Whatever he might yet become, he could never be again this self. This bright, full-pulsed identity was dead—dead for all time! Icarus-like, he had fallen midway in a flight that under other conditions might have been long and strong and sustained, and he bemoaned his broken wings.

So much depression of spirit was in his attitude, even listless despair, as he stood in the vacant apartment, looking down at the silver bowl on the table, filled with white roses and galax leaves, freshly gathered; so much of the thought in his mind was expressed in his face, distinct and definite in the firelight, despite the clouds at the dim window, that Lillian Royston, descending the stair unperceived, read in its lineaments an illuminated text of the past.

"Oh, Julian, Julian, I was cruel to you—I was cruel to you!" she cried out impulsively in a poignant voice.

He started violently at the sound, coming back indeed through the years. He looked up at her, seeing as in a dream her slim figure on the landing of the stair. Her face was soft and young and wistful; her aspect had conquered the years; she was again the girl he knew of old, whom he had fancied he had loved, crying out in the constraining impetus of a genuine emotion, "I was cruel to you! I was cruel to you!"

The next moment he was all himself of to-day—cool, confident, serene, with that suggestion of dash and vigor that characterized his movements. "Why, don't mention it, I beg," he said with a quiet laugh and his smooth, incidental society manner, as if it were indeed a matter of trifling consequence. Then, "I am sure neither of us has anything to regret."

The last sentence he thought a bit enigmatical, and he said to Briscoe afterward that, although strictly applicable, he did not quite know what he had meant by it. For the door had opened suddenly, and his host had inopportunely entered at the instant. Although Briscoe had affected to notice nothing, the significance of the scene was obvious. In fact, he heard the final sentence, and he was disposed to berate Bayne when the awkward breakfast ordeal was concluded and the party had scattered.

"You were mighty sarcastic, sure," he observed to Bayne over their cigars in the veranda, for with all the world submerged in the invisibilities of the mists the day's hunt was necessarily called off.

"Why, I was rattled," Bayne declared. "I did not expect to hear her upbraid herself."

"She is *so* sensitive," said Briscoe compassionately. He had heard from his wife the interpretation that she had placed on Bayne's sudden visit to this secluded spot, and though he well knew its falsity, he could but sympathize with her hope. "Lillian is very sensitive."

"I think it is up to me to be sensitive on that subject; but her sensitiveness at this late day is what gave *me* the cold shivers."

Briscoe eyed him sternly, the expression incongruous with the habitual aspect of his broad, jovial, florid face. Their features were visible to each other, though now and then the fog would shift between the rustic chairs in which they sat. Julian Bayne laughed. How easily even now did this woman convert every casual acquaintance into an eager partisan!

"If she is growing sensitive for her cruelties to me, I am apprehensive that it may be in her mind to make amends at this late day. I should keep away from her—discretion being the better part of valor."

Briscoe drew back with an air of averse distaste. He spoke guardedly, however, remembering that he was in his own house and fearful of going too far, yet he could not let this pass. "You surprise me, Julian. I never imagined *you* could say anything so—so—caddish."

"Why don't you say 'currish' and be done with it?" Julian's eyes flashed fire. His face had flushed deeply red. Every muscle was tense, alert. Then he checked himself hastily. He turned his cigar in his hand and looked intently at it as he reflected that this woman had already done harm enough in his life. He would not allow her to inflict the further and irreparable injury of coming between him and the friend he loved as a brother. He slipped quietly into his former easy attitude before he resumed, smiling: "Currish, indeed it may be, but that is exactly the kind of old dog Tray I am."

"You will please take notice that *I* have said nothing of the sort," Briscoe stiffly rejoined. "But I think and I do say that it is a preposterous instance of coxcombry to subject such a woman as Mrs. Royston—because of a generous moment of self-reproach for a cruel and selfish

deed—to the imputation of inviting advances from a man who coyly plans evasion and flight—and she scarcely two years a widow.”

“Time cuts no ice in the matter,” Bayne forced himself to continue the discussion. “She has certainly shown the manes of Archibald Royston the conventional respect.”

“She made an awful mistake, we all know that! And although I realized that it was on account of that rubbishy little quarrel you and she got up at the last moment, I felt for her, because to people generally her choice was subject to the imputation of being wholly one of interest. They were so dissimilar in taste, so uncongenial; and I really think *he* did not love her!”

“*He* had no other motive, at all events.”

“Oh, of course he had a certain preference for her; and it was the sort of triumph that such a man would relish to carry her off from you at the last moment. I always recognized *his* influence in the sensational elements of that dénouement. He liked her after a fashion—to preside in a princess-like style in his big house, to illustrate to advantage his florid expenditure of money, to sparkle with wit and diamonds at the head of his table—a fine surface for decoration she has! But Royston could n’t love—could n’t really care for anything but himself—a man of that temperament.”

Bayne rose; he had reached the limit of his endurance; he could maintain his tutored indifference, but he would not seek to analyze the event anew or to adjust himself to the differentiations of sentiment that Briscoe seemed disposed to expect him to canvass.

The encroachments of the surging seas of mist had reduced the limits of the world to the interior of the bungalow, and the myriad interests and peoples of civilization to the little household circle. The day in the pervasive constraint that hampered their relations wore slowly away. Under the circumstances, even the resources of Bridge were scarcely to be essayed. Bayne lounged for hours with a book in a swing on the veranda. Briscoe, his hands in his pockets, his hat on the back of his head, his cigar cocked between his teeth—house-bound, he smoked a prodigious number of them for sheer occupation—strolled aimlessly in and out, now in the stables, now listening and commenting as Gladys at the piano played the music of his choice. Lillian had a score of letters to write. Her mind, however, scarcely followed her pen as she sat in the little library that opened from the big, cheery hall. Her thoughts were with all that had betided in the past and what might have been. She canvassed anew, as often heretofore, her strange infatuation, like a veritable aberration, so soon she had ceased to love her husband, to make the signal and significant discovery that he was naught to love. She had always had a sort of enthusiasm for the truth in the abstract—not so much as a moral endowment, but a supreme fixity, the one immu-

table value, superior to vicissitudes, like the polar star. She could not weep for a lie; she could only wonder how it should ever have masqueraded as the holy verities. She would not now rehearse her husband's faults, and the great disaster of the revelation of his true character that made the few short years she had passed with him stretch out in retrospect like a long and miserable life. It was over now, and her friends could not disguise their estimation of the end as a blessed release. But peace had not come with it. She was not impervious to remorse, regret, humiliation, for her course. The sight of Bayne, the sound of his voice, had poignantly revived the past, and if she had suffered woeful straits from wanton cruelty, she could not deny to herself that she had been consciously, carelessly, and causelessly cruel. In withdrawing herself to the library she had thwarted certain feints of Mrs. Briscoe's designed to throw them together in her hope of their reconciliation. Lillian had become very definitely aware that this result was far alien to any expectation on Bayne's part, and her cheeks burned with humiliation that she should for one moment, with flattered vanity and a strange thrill about her heart, have inclined to Mrs. Briscoe's fantastic conviction as to the motive of his journey hither. Indeed, within his view she could now scarcely maintain her poise and the incidental unconscious mien that the conventions of the situation demanded. She welcomed the movement in the folds of the curtaining mist that betokened a prospect of lifting and liberating the housebound coterie. Presently, as she wrote, she heard the stir of the wind in the far reaches of the valley. The dense white veil that swung from the zenith became suddenly pervaded with vague shivers; then tenuous, gauzy pennants were detached, floating away in great lengths; the sun struck through from a dazzling focus in a broad, rayonnant, fibrous emblazonment of valley and range, and as she rose and went to the window to note the weather signs she could not resist the lure of escape. She had struggled all day with an eager desire to be out of the house, removed from the constantly recurring chances of meeting Bayne, quit of the sight of him. She instantly caught up her broad gray hat with its flaunting red and gray ostrich plumes and called out to Mrs. Briscoe a suggestion that they should repair to the vacant hotel for a tramp on its piazzas, for it was the habit of the two ladies in rainy or misty weather to utilize these long, sheltered stretches for exercise, and many a while they walked on dreary days in these deserted precincts.

"I'll overtake you," was Mrs. Briscoe's rejoinder, and until then Lillian had not noticed the employ of her hostess. The gardener was engaged in the removal of the more delicate ornamental growths about the porte-cochère and parterre to the shelter of the flower-pit, for bright chill weather and killing frosts would ensue on the dispersal of the mists. Mrs. Briscoe herself was intent on withdrawing certain hardier potted

plants merely from the verge of the veranda to a wire stand well under the roof. Briscoe was at the gun-rack in the hall, restoring to its place the favorite rifle he had intended to use to-day. He could not refrain from testing its perfect mechanism, and at the first sharp crack of the hammer, liberated by a tentative pull on the trigger, little Archie sprang up from his play on the hearth-rug, where he was harnessing a toy horse to Mrs. Briscoe's work-basket by long shreds of her zephyr, and ran clamoring for permission to hold the gun.

Mrs. Briscoe saw him through the open door and instantly protested: "Come away, Archie!" Then to her husband, "You men are always killing somebody with an unloaded gun. Come away, Archie!"

"Nonsense, Gladys!" Briscoe remonstrated. "Let the child see the rifle. There is not a shell in the whole rack."

She noticed her husband not at all. "Come away, Archie," she besought the little man, staring spell-bound with his big blue eyes. He had scant care for the authority of "Gad-ish," as Gladys loved for him lispingly to call her. Only when she began to plead that she had no one to help her with her flowers, to carry the pots for her, did he wrench himself from the contemplation of the flashing steel mechanism that had for him such wonderful fascination and lend his flaccid baby muscles to the fiction of help. He began zealously to toil to and fro, carrying the smallest pots wherever she bade him. Her own interest in the occupation was enhanced by the colloquy that ensued whenever she passed her small guest. "Hello, Archie!" she would call for the sake of hearing the saucy, jocose response: "Oh, oo Gad-ish!" as the juvenile convoy fared along with his small cargo.

Lillian felt that she could not wait. Gladys might come at her leisure. She burst impulsively out of the door, throwing on her hat as she went, albeit wincing that she must needs pass Bayne at close quarters as he still lounged in the veranda swing. He looked up at the sound of the swift step and the sudden stir, and for one instant their eyes met—an inscrutable look, fraught with an undivined meaning. For their lives, neither could have translated its deep intendment. She said no word, and he merely lifted his hat ceremoniously and once more bent his eyes on his book.

She was like a thing long imprisoned, liberated by some happy chance. Her feet seemed scarcely to touch the ground as she sped along down the ravine, then across the rustic bridge that spanned the chasm through which rushed the tumultuous mountain stream foaming among the boulders deep in its depths, and breaking ever and anon into crystal cascades. On the opposite side she soon struck into the mountain road that had been graded and tamed and improved by the hotel management into the aspect of a sophisticated driveway, as it swept up to the great flight of steps at the main entrance of the big white building.

IV.

THE vacant hotel, bereft of the pleasure-seeking crowds whose presence seemed the essential condition of its existence, looked strangely sinister in the silent golden splendor of the clearing afternoon, with its tiers of deserted piazzas, its band-stand mute and empty, the observatory perched above the precipice, seemingly so precarious as to have all the effect of teetering in the wind.

Languid now and preoccupied, she ascended the long flight of steps to the piazza and paused to look out at the great spread of the landscape, wreathed in flying mists and of a different aspect from this increase of elevation. She had begun to stroll aimlessly along in the possession of the seclusion she craved when she suddenly noted the fact that the front door stood a trifle ajar. She paused with a repugnant sense of a lapse of caution. Then she reflected that bolts and locks could add but little security in a desert solitude like this, where a marauder might work his will from September to June with no witnesses but the clouds and winds to hinder. She had forgotten the insistent declaration of Gladys that she had seen a light flicker from these blank windows the preceding night. Indeed, even at the time she had accounted it but the hysteric adjunct of their panic in the illusion of a stealthy step on the veranda of the bungalow. She was animated only by the simplest impulse of idle curiosity when she laid her hand on the knob of the bolt. The big door swung open on well-oiled hinges, and she found herself in the spacious hotel office, on one side of which were the clerk's desk and the office clock, looking queerly disconsolate without the loitering groups of humanity wont to congregate about the counter. The day glared garishly through the great sky-light on the dusty interior; the big windows held expansive sections of mountain landscape, bronze, blue, and scarlet, like vivid paintings in frames. A staircase of really fine and stately proportions descended from the lofty reach of the upper story, dividing into two sweeping flights from the landing. A massive mantel-piece was on the opposite side, with an immense fire-place, with heavy brass andirons and fender. She was a stranger to the interior of the place, for her visit to the locality began after the closing of the hotel, but though she looked about with a vague sub-current of interest as she sauntered through the building, glad of any pretext to prolong her absence from the bungalow, her mind was really introverted.

She felt that she could never forgive herself her part in the scene of the morning, that wild, impulsive cry that bespoke at once confession and a plea for pardon. At the sheer recollection of his rejoinder she tingled and winced as from the touch of fire. "Don't mention it," quotha. And they neither had aught to regret—he was sure of that, forsooth! Regret! It was only another name for her life. There was

nothing but regret, night and day, sleeping and waking. But oh, how could she have said the words? What was it to him? He cared naught for her now and her cruelties—an old, old story to him, to be sure, told to the end, the pages shut. And she must needs seem to seek to turn the leaf anew! What else indeed could he think? Surely she had been beguiled by Gladys's vicarious sentimentality as to the lure of his coming, even while she had flouted the possibility.

Suddenly—a sound! It broke upon her absorption so abruptly that in an instant every muscle was adjusted for flight, though she paused and looked fearfully over her shoulder. Only an echo, she told her plunging heart—an echo of her own footfalls in the resonant emptiness of the deserted place. She had wandered down a long corridor, from which doors opened only on one side into the big bare dining-room, the chairs all ranged on the tops of the many round tables, standing at equidistant intervals. An echo—doubtless that was all. She upbraided herself to have sustained so sudden and causeless a fright. Her heart was beating like a trip-hammer. It seemed to fill all the building with the wild iteration of its pulsations. As she sought to reassure herself, she remembered that in a cross-hall she had noted the telephone, the wire still intact, as she knew, for the connection of the hotel was with that of the bungalow and on a party-line of the exchange at Shaftesville, twenty miles away. If she were really frightened, she could in one moment call up the house across the ravine.

The next instant she was almost palsied with recurrent terror: the footfall, stealthy, shuffling, weighty, sounded again. It was never the echo of her own deft, light step. A definite, sibilant whisper suddenly hissed with warning throughout the place, and as she turned with the instinct of flight she caught a glimpse in the darkling mirror across the dining-room of a fugitive speeding figure, then another, and still another, all frantically, noiselessly fleeing—what or whom, she could not descry, she did not try to discriminate.

Without a word or a sound—her voice had deserted her—she turned precipitately and fled in the opposite direction through the corridor, down a cross-hall, and burst out of a side door upon a porch that was the nearest outlet from the building. This porch was less intended as an exit, however, than an outlook. True there were steps that led down at one side to the ground, but the descent thence was so steep, so rugged and impracticable, that obviously no scheme of utility had prompted its construction. Jagged outcropping ledges, a chaos of scattered boulders, now and again a sharply precipitous verge showing a vertical section of the denuded strata, all formed a slant so precarious and steep that with the sharp sound of the door, closing on its spring, Bayne looked up from his seat in the swing on the veranda across the ravine in blank amaze-

ment to see her there essaying the descent, as if in preference to an exit by the safe and easy method of the winding road at the front of the edifice.

Lillian, still with all the impetus of terror in her muscles and nerves, her breath short and fluttering, her eyes distended and unseeing, plunged wildly down the rugged, craggy descent, painfully aware of his wonder as he gazed from the distance, prefiguring, too, his disapproval. Perhaps this had its unnerving influence, for though swift and sure-footed ordinarily, her ankle turned amidst the gravel shifting beneath her flying steps, and she sank suddenly to the ground, slipped down a precipitous incline, then caught herself, half crouching against a gigantic boulder.

There was no recourse for Bayne. No one else was within view. Though between his teeth he muttered his distaste for the devoir that should bring him to her side, and his disavowal of the alacrity he was constrained to show, he started at a good pace down the ravine to her assistance, to "make his manners," as he said sarcastically to himself. But when he had come to the little rustic bridge and, glancing up, saw that she had not yet risen, he began to run, and before he reached her, climbing the ascent with athletic agility, he called out to ask if the fall had hurt her.

"I don't know," she faltered, and when he was at her side she looked up at him with a pale and quivering face.

"Try to stand," he urged, as he leaned down and took her arm. "Let me lift you. There! How did it happen?"

"My ankle turned," she replied, rising with effort and standing unsteadily, despite his support.

"Does it pain you?" he queried with polite solicitude, looking down at the dainty low-cut white shoe. "Bear your weight on it."

She essayed the experiment. "No," she barely whispered; "it is all right."

He fixed upon her a look of questioning amazement, as she still held trembling to his arm. "What is the matter, then?"

"There is somebody in the hotel."

He gave a hasty glance upward from under the brim of his white straw hat. "Hardly likely—but I'll examine and see."

He was about to start off when she tightened her clutch on his arm.

"No, no," she pleaded. "Don't leave me! I don't know why—but I can't stand. I can't walk."

"Did you really hear something?" he asked sceptically.

The light note of satire stung her pride. "Oh, I saw them, and they saw me," she protested. "I saw three men, and they all ran as I came into the dining-room."

He broke into a short laugh. "Got them on the run, did you? Not very formidable they were, you must admit. Shadows, I fancy. There is a large mirror on the blank side of the dining-room opposite the door.

Don't you suppose it possible that you saw only your own moving reflection?"

Her pride was roused. The pulse of anger began to tint her face with a dull crimson. "I should imagine I could distinguish my own reflection from three men—rough-looking men with slouched hats, all running and looking backward over their shoulders."

It had been a conscious effort to nerve herself for this protest in defense of her poise and capacity, but at the mere recollection of the scene she had conjured up anew she fell to trembling, looking very pale again and as if she might faint.

"Well, it is no great matter, as the intruders were bluffed off," he said suavely, putting the question aside. "I will send one of Briscoe's grooms to investigate the premises. But now, suppose we go to the piazza, and let you rest there and recover from the strain to your ankle." Once more he glanced down at the dainty shoe with its high French heel. "I don't wonder it turned. A proper shoe for mountaineering!" That rancor against a frivolity of feminine fashion that holds a menace to health or safety, so characteristic of the utilitarian masculine mind, was a touch of his old individuality, and it made him seem to her more like himself of yore. The resemblance did not tend to confirm her composure, and she was almost piteous as she protested that she could not, she would not, go near the hotel again.

"Why, you need not, then," he reassured her abruptly, waiving the possibility of insistence, as much as to say it was no concern of his.

"I might walk to the observatory," she suggested, "and—and—I need not detain you then."

"In view of three bandits in slouched hats, although all on the back-track—and although I am convinced that it was but their astral apparitions with which you were favored—I will venture to intrude my society until I can see you to the Briscoe bungalow."

"Oh, there's no intrusion," she rejoined petulantly. "You must know I could n't mean that!"

"I never know what you mean, I am sure!" he said with that tense note of satire. Then he paused with a vague wonder at himself thus to trench on the emotional phases between them that must be buried forever. Remembering her own allusion that morning, her cry of regret and appeal, he was apprehensive of some renewal of the topic that he had thus invited, and he began to move hastily down the slope, supporting her with care, but with a certain urgency too. He was obviously eager to terminate the conversational opportunity, and when it was requisite to pause to rest he improved the respite by beckoning to one of the stablemen passing near, bound toward a pasture in the rear of the hotel with a halter in his hand, and ordering him to investigate the building to discover any signs of intrusion.

The man hearkened in patent surprise, then asked if he might defer the commission till he had harnessed Fairy-foot, Mr. Briscoe having ordered out the dog-cart and his favorite mare.

"Plenty of time, plenty of time! We can't hope to overtake them, with the start they have already. Just see if there are any signs of intrusion into the place, and report. And now, Mrs. Royston, shall we move on?"

The observatory was a structure strong but singularly light and airy of effect, poised on the brink of the mountain, above a slant so steep as to be precipitous indeed, terminating in a sheer vertical descent, after affording such foothold as the supporting timbers required. A great landscape it overlooked of wooded range and valley in autumnal tints and burnished sunset glow, but it made only scant impression on the minds of both, looking out with preoccupied, unseeing eyes. The balustrade around the four sides formed the back of a bench, and on this seat Lillian sank down, still feeble and fluttering, painfully agitated, acutely aware that, as she had no obvious physical hurt, the nervous shock she had sustained might scarcely suffice to account for her persistent claim on his aid and attention. Certainly he was warranted in thinking anything, all, he would, since her wild, impulsive appeal in the early morning. How had it chanced, that cry from her heart! It was a triumph in some sort for him, unsought, complete, yet so pitiable, so mean, that he did not even care for it. His face was not triumphant; rather, listless, anxious, careworn. He was gazing down toward the bungalow where Briscoe stood at the head of the flight of the veranda steps, drawing on his driving gloves, while Fairy-foot, the fine mare, now resplendent in the least restrictions of harness that might control her bounding spirits and splendid strength, stood between the shafts of the dog-cart on the drive, a groom at her head holding the bit.

Mrs. Briscoe stood near, and they discerned from his gestures that he was inviting her to accompany him. They could not hear the words at this distance, of course, but presently Briscoe, the most transparently candid of men, suddenly whirled and glanced up toward the observatory across the ravine, showing as plainly as possible that the two had become the subject of conversation.

Lillian was all unstrung, her powers of self-control annulled. She broke out with as unreasoning a sense of injury as a sensitive child might have felt. "They are talking about us!" she wailed.

"They are not the first!" Bayne could not restrain his curt, bitter laugh. The unconscious humor of the suggestion was so patent, albeit the edge cut deep.

"And how do you suppose that fact makes *me* feel?" she asked, looking up at him, her eyes full of tears, her heart swelling, her face scarlet.

Bayne would have given much to avoid this moment. But now that the discussion was upon him, he said to himself that he would not traffic with the insincerities, he would not be recreant to his own identity. He would not fawn, and bow, and play the smug squire of dames, full of specious flatteries, and kiss the hand that smote him.

"And how do you suppose that *I* should think you could feel at all?" he retorted sternly.

It was so unlike him, the rebuke—he had so ardently worshipped her, even her faults, which were like shining endowments in his estimation—that for the first time she felt the full poignancy of his alienation. He was no longer hers, loving, regretting, always yearning after her, the unattainable! Had he not said only to-day that neither of them had aught to regret? Was this what he had really felt through the long years of their separation? Was it she who had forfeited him, rather than he who had lost her? She sat quite still, almost stunned by the realization, a vague sense of bereavement upon her. A woman's faith in the constancy of a lover is a robust endowment! It withstands change and time and many a coercive intimation.

"I suppose," she said at length, quite humbly, "it is natural that you should say that to me."

"You asked for it," he replied tersely.

Then they were both silent for a space, looking down at the group on the veranda of the bungalow.

"May I have the honor and pleasure of your company, madam?" Briscoe had asked his wife with fantastic formality.

"You may *not*!" she rejoined with a gay laugh.

"And why not?"

"I declare, Ned, you live so much up here in the wilderness, with your bears and deer and catamounts and mountaineers, that you are likely to forget all the *bienséance* you ever knew. Don't you perceive that my duties as chaperon to those lovers should lie nearest my heart?"

Then it was that he turned and cast that comprehending glance at the two in the distant observatory. Knowing how far from Bayne's mind was the emotion, the intention, she ascribed to him, that she would fain foster, his face grew rueful and overcast. He shook his head with disconsolate rebuke. "Oh, you woman, you!"

But the reproach did not strike home. Mrs. Briscoe was quite satisfied to be a woman, and was avowedly seeking to add to the normal subtleties of this state the special craft of a matchmaker.

Briscoe desired to avoid being drawn into any confession of his knowledge of Bayne's attitude of mind, and, aware of his own lack of diplomacy, sheered off precipitately from the subject. He turned, beaming anew, to the little boy who was looking on, cherubically rosy, at the sleek mare and the smart groom at her bit.

"Then, Archibald Royston, Esquire, may I hope that *you* will favor me?"

Archibald Royston, Esquire, suddenly apprehending in the midst of his absorption the nature of the invitation, gave two elastic bounces straight up and down expressive of supreme ecstasy; then, his arms outstretched, he began to run wildly up and down the veranda, looking in at the doors and windows as he passed, seeking his mother and her permission.

"Oh!" cried Lillian, springing to her feet as she watched the dumb show at the distance. "They want Archie to go to drive. Oh, how can I make them hear me? I am sure Ned will not take him without permission."

She waved her hand, but the distance was obviously too great for the signal to be understood, and Briscoe's attitude was doubtful and perplexed. There was no time to be lost, for it was growing late, and a postponement, as far as Archie was concerned, seemed inevitable.

"Oh, the poor little fellow will be so disappointed! The mare will be off before I can make them understand."

"Wait," said Bayne authoritatively. He sprang upon the bench, and in this commanding position placed both hands megaphone-wise to his lips, and as Archie came running along the veranda again, having desisted his mother in the distance, and with outstretched arms bleating forth his eager, unheard appeal, Bayne shouted, his voice clear as a trumpet, "Yes, you *may* go!"

Not until he was once more on the floor of the observatory did he realize the form of the permission, and what relish its assumption of authority must give the match-making Mrs. Briscoe! Apparently, it did not impress Lillian as they stood together and she smilingly watched the group at the bungalow, as Archie was swung to a seat in the dog-cart beside his host. It seemed for a moment that they were off, but Mrs. Briscoe, with womanly precaution, bethought herself to throw a wrap into the vehicle. Throughout the day the close curtaining mists had resisted all stir of air, and the temperature had been almost sultry. Since the lifting of the vapors, the currents of the atmosphere were flowing freely once more, and the crystal clarity that succeeded was pervaded by an increasing chilliness. Before nightfall, it would be quite cold, and doubtless the smart little red coat, gay with its Persian embroideries, would be brought into requisition.

For many a month afterward, whenever Lillian closed her eyes, she saw that little red coat. Shutting out the light, the world, brought neither rest nor darkness; instead, the long flaring vistas of gold and russet foliage and gray crags and flaming sunset remained indelible, and amidst it all one vivid point of scarlet hue as the little red coat was tossed through the air like a red leaf flying in the wind.

Now, as all unprescient she watched the group, she thought again they were gone. But no! Fairy-foot was a handful, even for so capital a whip as Briscoe. He obviously considered that the boy would be more secure stowed on the floor of the vehicle, half under the soft rug, and braced by the firm foot planted on either side against the dash-board.

"How considerate!" the watching mother thought with a glow of gratitude, noting the caution.

Suddenly the groom leaped aside; the splendid mare sprang forward; there was a whirl of wheels, a world of rays as the gleaming spokes caught the sunshine, and they were gone indeed!

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Royston, her eyes bright and soft with tenderness, "what a delight for Archie! He fairly adores to go with Ned. He owes it to you this time. You always took little things so much to heart."

"And great ones, too, to my sorrow," he said.

Her face changed. She was trembling once more on the brink of tears. She looked up at him with earnest appeal. "I wish, Julian, that we could forget the past."

"I do not," he returned, stern and grave, looking far away over the landscape.

"No," she cried in a sudden transport of painful emotion; "you hold it against me like a grudge—a grudge that you despise too much to wreak vengeance for its sake. The past will always live in your memory—you hold it like a sword to my throat. You know that I shall always feel the torture of its edge, but in your magnanimity"—with sarcastic emphasis—"you forbear to thrust in the murderous blade."

"Good God, Lillian!" exclaimed Bayne, losing his balance altogether at the accusation. "How have I arrogated magnanimity, or anything else? I assume nothing! I have sought to efface myself while here, as far as might be. For the sake of all concerned—you, the Briscoes, *les convenances*, myself—I could not run away at the sight of you, like a whipped hound! But I perceive my error. I will get out of this forthwith. Heaven knows it has been anything but a pleasure!"

"Don't let me stand between you and your friends," she sobbed, weeping now in the reaction of sentiment. "Don't let me drive you away."

"Why not?" he sought relief from the pressure of the circumstances by affecting a lighter tone. "By your own account, you have stampeded three men this afternoon. I shall be the fourth! The fugitives are counting up like Falstaff's 'rogues in buckram.' Are you ready to go now? We are leaving Mrs. Briscoe alone."

He did not offer to assist her to rise. Somehow, he could resist aught, all, save the touch of that little hand. It brought back to him as nothing else the girl he had loved, and who had loved him. Oh, he was

sure of it once! This woman was a changeling in some mystic sort—the same in aspect, yet how alien to his ideal of yore.

She did not seem to mark the lapse of courtesy. She sat still, with her broad gray hat tilted back on her head, a soft and harmonious contrast with her golden hair and roseate face. Her ungloved hands were clasped in her lap, her eyes were melancholy, meditative, fixed on the distant mountains. "I wish we might reach some mutual calm thought of the past, like the tranquil, unimpassioned brightness of the close of this troubled, threatening day. We don't care now for the clouds that overcast the morning. To attain some quiet sentiment of forgiveness——"

"I ask no pardon," he said curtly.

"Oh!"—she gazed up at him with all her soul in her eyes—"you have no need!"

Had she been warned in a dream, she could have compassed no surer method of reducing his pride than this self-abnegating generosity. But suddenly an alien sound impinged on the quietude. The sharp note of a rifle shattered the silence, the fragmentary echoes clamoring back from the rocks like a volley of musketry.

"How startling that was!" she exclaimed, turning to look in the opposite direction over the placid valley commanded by the observatory, with the purple mountains encircling the horizon. "How this clear air carries the sound!"

"That was not distant," Bayne observed. "Damp air is a better conductor of sound than a clear atmosphere."

"It was like blasting," she submitted.

"It was a rifle-shot," he discriminated. "A still-hunter, probably. The deer come down from the coverts toward evening to drink. Some rock may have fallen along the river-bank, dislodged by the concussion."

A sense of melancholy was in the air, gathering with the gathering darkness. The light was fading out of the west, and the early autumnal dusk was at hand. Lillian was sensible of an accession of lassitude, a realization of defeat in a cause which she felt now it was futile to have essayed. Why should he forgive? How was reparation possible? She could not call back the Past—she could not assuage griefs that time had worn out long ago and seared over the wounds. She was quite silent as she rose and together they took their way down toward the bungalow. While she flagged now and again, she walked without assistance, though he kept close and ready at her side.

Gladys watched their approach expectantly, but her face fell as they drew near and she could discern their listless expression and manner. She did not await their arrival, but turned, disappointed, within. It was already time to dress for dinner, the ladies habitually observing this formality, although Briscoe often went in knickerbockers till midnight.

Lillian paused on the veranda and gazed down the road, winding away into the dusky red flare of the fading west, for the drive must needs be short in this season of early nightfall. There was no sign of approach along its smooth and shadowy curves, and at the end of the long vista, where the jagged verges of crags serrated the serene green sky a star shone, white and splendid, amidst the vanishing vermillion suffusions of the sunset-tide.

V.

IN the light of after events, one might wonder if the genial, care-free Edward Briscoe remembered any detail of the discarded arrangement of the previous evening for the transportation of his transitory guest, Frank Dean, to Shaftesville; if he realized that at the moment when the revenue officer would have been starting on the journey as the host had insistently planned it he was himself at the turn of the road and just beyond the jutting crag; if he divined that the vibrations of the telephone wire had betrayed the matter to a crafty listening ear on the party-line in the vacant hotel across the ravine—or was the time too short for the consideration? Did he even recognize the significance of the apparition when a swift, erect figure stepped openly from under the shadowy boughs of the balsam firs into the middle of the road, that the bead might be drawn straight? Did he appreciate that the flash is sooner sped than the missile and know his fate before the rifle-ball crashed into his skull? Or was the instant all inadequate and did he enter eternity ere he was well quit of this world?

Frightened by the sudden appearance of the man in the middle of the thoroughfare, the funnel-shaped flare of light, the sharp report of the weapon, the mare, trotting at full speed, swerved, plunged, backed, the reins hanging loose about her heels, her driver having fallen forward upon the dash-board. The dog-cart began to careen to one side as the animal continued to back and rear, deterred from flight by the figure standing still directly in the road. Suddenly she sought to turn in the restricted narrow space, and instantly the hind wheels were over the verge of the precipice.

All useless were the convulsive efforts of the creature to maintain her footing on the rocky brink, the clutching hoofs, the elastic bounds. With the weight of the vehicle, the dead man leaning heavily on the dash-board, it was but a moment of suspense—then like a thunderbolt the whole went crashing down into the valley, the depth to be conjectured by the considerable interval of time before the sound of rending boughs and surging foliage in the air gave token that the wreck was hurtling through the trees on the levels a thousand feet below.

Three men, all armed with rifles, had sprung from among the firs and stood aghast and listening on the verge of the crag. There was no

longer a sound. The tragedy was complete, irrevocable, before a word was uttered.

"'T war n't *him!*" gasped the youngest—hardly more than a boy indeed. His broad, beardless face was ghastly white, and his lips trembled as violently as his shaking hand.

"Lawd! That war *Edward Briscoe!* What a pity, *sure!* It war a plumb mistake, Copenny," plained an elder man, whose rifle had not been fired. There was a regretful cadence in his voice akin to tears, and he held his long, ragged red beard in one hand as he peered down into the unresponsive depths.

"You oughter hev made sure afore ye teched the trigger, Copenny, that he *war* the revenuer!" cried the young fellow, Alvin Holvey, with a sudden burst of petulance, despite the tragic realization expressed in his quivering face. "Ye're sech a dead shot that ye could hev spared a minute ter make sure of the revenuer, afore *he* could hev pulled a shooting-iron."

The man who had fired the fatal shot had seemed hitherto stunned, silent and motionless. Now he exclaimed in self-justification, "Why, I war sure, plumb sure, I thought. We-uns chased that man Dean clear to Briscoe's house last night—his horse went lame and he got lost from his posse—but when I fund he hed sheltered with Briscoe, we-uns went into the empty hotel ter wait and watch fur him ter go. Not knowin' how many men Briscoe hev got thar, we-uns did n't want ter tackle the house. An' whilst at the hotel the Briscoes' tellyfun-bell rung—ye know it's on a party line with the hotel connection—an' I tuk down the thing they call the receiver an' listened. An' that's jes' the way Briscoe planned it: ter send the revenuer down an hour by sun with the dog-cart an' his fine mare. Shucks! Ef Briscoe war minded ter step into Frank Dean's shoes, he hev jes' hed ter take what war savin' up fur the revenuer, that's all!" Once more he relapsed into silent staring at the brink, balked, dumfounded, and amazed.

Suddenly he seemed to respond to some inward monition of danger, of responsibility. "I be enough of a dead shot ter stop all that dad-burned talk of yourn!" he drawled in a languid, falsetto, spiritless voice, but with an odd intimation of a deadly intention. "Ye both done the deed the same ez ef ye hed pulled the trigger; ye helped ter plan it, an' kem along ter see it done an' lend a hand ef needed. Ye both done the deed the same ez me—that's the law, an' ye know it. That is sure the law in Tennessee."

"Waal, now, Phineas Copenny, 't war n't right nor fair ter we-uns ter clumsey it up so," protested the young mountaineer. "Ef it hed been the revenuer, I'd hev nare word ter say. I'd smack my lips, fur the deed would taste good ter me, an' I'd stand ter it. But this hyar Mr. Briscoe—why, we-uns hev not even got a gredge agin him."

"No, nor nobody else that ever I hearn of. Mr. Briscoe war a plum favorite, far an' nigh," said old Jubal Clenk, the eldest of the party. "But shucks!" he continued, with a change of tone and the evident intention of preserving harmony among the conspirators. "'T war jes' an accident, an' that's what it will pass fur among folks ginerally. Mr. Briscoe's mare skeered an' shied an' backed off'n the bluff—that air whut the country-side will think. Whenst his body is fund his head will be mashed ter a jelly by the fall, an' nobody kin say he kem otherwise by his death—jes' an accident in drivin' a skittish horse-critter."

Whether it was a sound, whether it was a movement, none of the group was accurately aware. It may have been merely that mesmeric influence of an intently concentrated gaze that caused them suddenly to turn. They beheld standing in the road—and they flinched at the sight—a witness to all the proceedings. A small, a simple, object to excite such abject terror as blanched the faces of the group—a little boy, a mere baby, staring at the men with wide blue eyes and unconjecturable emotions. He had doubtless been enveloped in the rug which had fallen from the vehicle as it first careened in the road, and which now lay among the wayside weeds. His toggery of the juvenile mode made him seem smaller than he really was; his dark red cloth coat, embroidered in Persian effects, was thick and rendered his figure chubby of aspect; his feet and legs were encased in bulky white leggins; he wore a broad white beaver hat, its crown encircled by a red ribbon, and his infantile jauntiness of attire was infinitely incongruous with the cruel tragedy and his piteous plight. Although perhaps stunned at first by the shock of the fall, he was obviously uninjured, and stood sturdily erect and vigilant. He looked alert, inquiring, anxious, resolved into wonder, silently awaiting developments. His eyes shifted from one speaker to another of the strange party.

"Lord! He'll tell it all!" exclaimed Alvin Holvey, appalled and in hopeless dismay.

"Naw, he won't, now," snarled Copenny rancorously. "Thar will be a way ter stop his mouth."

"Why, he is too leetle ter talk. He don't sense nuthin'," cried old Clenk, with an eager note of expostulation, attesting that he was human, after all. "Don't do nuthin' else rash, Phineas Copenny, fur the love of God!"

Jubal Clenk dropped on one knee in front of the little boy, and the two were inscrutably eying each other at close quarters. "Hello, Bubby! Whar's yer tongue? Cat got it?" he asked in a grandfatherly fashion, while the other men looked on, grim and anxious, at this effort to gauge the mentality of the child and their consequent danger from him.

Still staring, the little boy began slowly to shake his head in negation.

"What's yer name, Squair? What's yer name?"

But the child still stared silently, either uncomprehending or perceiving that his safety lay in incompetency.

Clenk rose to his feet in sudden relief. "He don't sense nuthin'! He's too little to talk. He can't tell wuth shucks! We will jes' leave him hyar in the road, an' the folks that find what's down thar in the valley will find him too. I wonder somebody ain't passed a'ready. An' sure we-uns oughter be a-travellin'."

But Holvey revolted against this offhand assumption of confidence. He made a supplemental effort on his own account. "Why don't ye tell yer name, Bubby?" he asked cajolingly.

"Tause," the child answered abruptly, "I tan't talk."

Copenny burst into sudden sardonic laughter, with wondrous little mirth in the tones, and the other miscreants were obviously disconcerted and disconsolate, while the small schemer, whose craft had failed midway, looked affrighted and marvelling from one to another, at a loss to interpret the mischance.

"Dadburn it!" said the mercurial Clenk, as depressed now as a moment earlier he had been easily elated. "We-uns will jes' hev ter take him along of us an' keep him till he furgits all about it."

"An' when will ye be sure o' that?" sneered Copenny. "He is as tricky as a young fox."

Half stunned by the tremendous import of the tragedy he had witnessed, the child scarcely entered into its true significance in his concern for his own plight. He realized that he was being riven from his friends, his own, and made a feeble outcry and futile resistance, now protesting that he would tell nothing, and now piteously assuring his captors that he could not talk, while they gathered him up in the rug, which covered head and feet, even the flaunting finery of his big, white beaver hat.

In the arms of the grandfatherly Clenk, he was carried along the bridle-path in the dulling sunset, and presently dusk was descending on the austere mountain wilderness; the unmeasured darkness began to pervade it, and silence was its tenant. As the party went further and further into the woods, the struggles of the child grew fitful; soon he was still, and at last—for even Care must needs have pity for his callow estate—he was asleep, forgetting in slumber for a time all the horror that he had seen and suffered.

But when he came to himself he was a shivering, whimpering bundle of homesick grief. He wanted his mother—he would listen to naught but assurances that they were going to her right away—right away! It was a strange place wherein he found himself—all dark, save for flaring torches. He could not understand his surroundings, and indeed he did not try. He only rubbed his eyes with his fists and said again and again that he wanted his mother. He was seated on a small stone pillar, a stalagmite in a limestone cavern, where there were many such pillars

and pendants of like material hanging from the roof, all most dimly glimpsed in the torch-light against an infinitude of blackness. The men who had brought him hither, and others whom he had not heretofore seen, were busied about a dismantled stone furnace, gathering up such poor belongings as had escaped the wreckings of the revenue force. Now and then a glitter from the fragments of the copper still and the sections of the coils of the worm marked the course their ravages had taken, and all the chill, cavernous air was filled with the sickly odor of singlings and the fermenting mash adhering to the broken staves of the great riven tanks, called the beer-tubs. The moonlight came into this dark place at the further end, for this was one of the many caves among the crags that overhang the Little Tennessee River, and once, looking toward the jagged portal, Archie saw a sail, white in the beams on the lustrous current, and asked if they were going in that boat to his mother, for, he said, he knew that she did not live in this cellar.

"Yes, yes," Clenk assured him. They were making ready to leave now, though not in that boat. "An' look-a-hyar! What a pretty! Ye kin hev this ter play with ef ye will be good."

He led the little boy up to a tallow dip blazing on the head of a barrel, that he might have light to examine the token. It was a small bit of the cavernous efflorescence, which, growing on subterranean walls, takes occasionally definite form, some specimens resembling a lily, others being like a rose; the child tried feebly to be grateful, and put it with care into one of the pockets of his little red coat—his pockets in which he had once felt such plethora of pride!

VI.

WHEN next he saw the river the lustre of the moon had dulled on the currents. No more the long lines of shimmering light trailing off into the deep shadow of the wooded banks, no more the tremulous reflection of the half-moon, swinging like some supernal craft in the great lacustrine sweep where the stream broadens in rounding the point. Now a filmy veil was over all, yet the night was so fine that the light filtered through the mist, and objects were still discernible, though only vaguely visible, like the furnishings of a dream. A rowboat was rocking on the ripples among the boulders at the water's edge. As the child made the perilous descent in the practised clasp of the grandfatherly Clenk, he could look up and see the jagged portal of the cave he had left high above the river, though not so high as the great, bare, deciduous trees waving their lofty boughs on the summit of the cliffs. Certain grim, silent, gaunt figures, grotesquely contorted in the mist, the child's wide blue eyes traced out, as the other moonshiners climbed too down the rugged face of the crag, all burdened with bundles of varying size and unimaginable contents—

food, clothing, or such appliances of their craft as the hurried revenue raiders had chanced to overlook. The little boy must have contended with fear in this awesome environment, the child of gentlest nurture, but he thought he was going to his mother, or perchance he could not have submitted with such docility, so uncomplainingly. Only when they had reached the rocky marge of the water and he had been uncoiled from the rug and set upon his feet did he lift his voice in protest.

Clenk had stepped into the boat and seated himself, the oars rattling smartly in the rowlocks, the sound sharp on the misty air, as he laid hold on them. "So far, so good," he exclaimed cheerily.

"Won't they be fur trackin' of *him*?" One of the moonshiners, whom the child had not seen before, seemed disposed to rebuke this easy optimism.

"What fur? They will think Bubby went over the bluff, too," Clenk declared definitely.

"There's nuthin' ter show fur it, though," Copenny joined the opposite opinion.

"Nuthin' needed in that mixtry of horse-flesh an' human carcass an' splintered wood and leather," argued Clenk.

"Yes, they will hev ter gather up them remains in a shovel," acquiesced Holvey.

The shadowy form of the doubter who had introduced the subject, thick-set, stoop-shouldered, showed in its attitude that he was lowering and ill at ease. "Waal, you-uns hev made a powerful botch of the simple little trick of drawing a bead on a revenueur anyhow. Takin' one man fur another—I never dreamed o' the beat. Copenny war so sure o' the man an' the mare. I never pertended to know either. Seems ter me ye oughter be willin' ter lis'n ter reason now."

"Waal, let's hear reason, then," Copenny's sardonic falsetto tones rasped on the air, and the little head under the broad white, gayly beribboned hat turned up attentively, as the child stood so low down among the big booted feet of the armed moonshiners.

"Why, how easy it would hev been ter throw su'thin' over the bluff——" the counsellor began.

"Good Lord!" Clenk burst forth angrily, from his seat in the boat, "ain't ye got *no* human feelin's, Jack Drann? We-uns never went ter shed the innercent blood nohow. We-uns war loaded fur that tricky revenueur, an' Edward Briscoe war kilt by mistake. An' now ye ter be talkin' 'bout heavin' the leetle, harmless deedie over the bluff!"

"What ails yer hearin'?" retorted Drann angrily. "I said *su'thin'*—his coat, his hat—throw *su'thin'* over, ter make folks think he war in the accident, too—mare run away and the whole consarn flopped bodaciously over the bluff! They will scour the kentry fur Bubby ef thar ain't su'thin' positive ter make them *sure* ez he be dead, too."

Jubal Clenk, so readily cast down, meditated dolorously, as he sat still in the boat, on this signal omission in the chain of evidence. "It would sure hev made it all 'pear a heap mo' like an accident," he said disconsolately. Then, with suddenly renewing hopefulness, "But 't ain't too late yet—good many hours 'fore daylight. We kin send the coat an' hat back an' toss them over the bluff long before it is light good."

Thus it was that the moonshiners laid hold on the boy's simple possessions, and thus it was that Archie fought and contended for his own. He clutched at the cuffs as Copenny dragged the sleeves over his wrists; he held on to his hat with both hands, despite the grip of the elastic under his chin, and he stamped and screamed in a manner that he had heretofore known to inspire awe and respect in the nursery and disarm authority. Alack, it had lost its efficacy now! Most of the men took no notice whatever of his callow demonstrations of wrath, though old Clenk, with a curious duality of mental process, laughed indulgently at his antics of infantile rage, despite his own absorptions, his sense of danger, his smart of loss and wreck of prospects.

It was Copenny who undertook to carry the coat and rug back to the spot, and they willingly agreed to this on the score that he knew best the precise locality where the catastrophe had befallen. Secretly, however, he had resolved not to rejoin his companions at a named rendezvous, for he had bethought himself that if all fled but him, remaining in his accustomed home, he would necessarily avoid implication in the crime with them. The boat had been provisioned with a view to their escape by water when the ambush of the revenue officer had been planned, and they were now congratulating themselves on their foresight as they prepared to embark. Clenk had an ill-savored story to tell of the apprehension of a malefactor through the coercion of hunger, constrained to stop and beg a meal as he fled from justice, and Drann had known a man whose neck was forfeited by the necessity of robbing a hen-roost, the cackling poultry in this instance as efficient in the cause of law and order as the geese that saved Rome. Copenny, listening sardonically, could not be thankful for such small favors. His venture as a moonshiner at all events was, so to speak, a side line of employ. He was trained a blacksmith, and had a pretty fair stake in the world, according to the rating of a working-man of this region, now in jeopardy of total loss. The rest had nothing to lose, and as ever and anon they fell to canvassing the opportunities of beginning anew in a fresh place the dubious struggle for bare subsistence, his determination to slip free of them was confirmed. The morrow would see him in his appointed place—nay, he perceived a sure means of hoodwinking any possible suspicion of the authorities by finding a conspicuous position in the searching parties who would go out, he knew, as the night wore on and the alarm was given that the owner of the bungalow had not returned.

The boat with the others embarked was far up the river before the child had ceased to sob and plain for his precious gear. He began to listen curiously to the splash of the oars as they marked time and the boat rode the waves elastically. There was no other sound in all the night-bound world, save once the crisp, sharp bark of a fox came across the water from the dense, dark riparian forests. The mists possessed all the upper atmosphere, but following the boat were white indiscriminated presentments on the sombre surface of the river, elusive in the vapor and suggestive of something swimming in pursuit. Once Archie pointed his mittened hand at this foaming wake, but the question died on his lips as the dank autumnal air buffeted his chill cheek. He shivered in his thin little white linen dress, meant for indoor wear only, with its smart red leather belt clasped low and loose about it, and the hardship of cold and hunger tamed him. He was glad to nestle close to the pasty-faced Holvey, who had not yet recovered the normal glow of complexion, and to stick his yellow head under the moonshiner's arm for warmth while he steered the craft. Indeed, when the boat was at length run into one of the small, untenanted islands and the party disembarked, the little boy began to chirp genially and to laugh for joy as a fire was kindled amidst the rocks and brush of the interior, invisible from the shores. He basked in the blaze and grew pink and gay, and even sought to initiate a game of peekaboo from behind his white mittens with one of the ruffians; and although a bit dashed when the surly, absorbed eyes stared unresponsively at him, he suddenly plucked up spirit to ask if they were going to have supper, and to say that he wanted some, and that he was a very good boy.

"Breakfast, Bub—this is the tother eend of the day," Clenk explained, preparing to broil slices of meat on the coals. There was soon a johnny-cake baked on a board set up before the flames, but the pork was evidently a new proposition to the small captive, and although he eyed it greedily he could make no compact with it. Now and again he licked with a grimace of distaste the unsavory chunk given him, and desisted to watch with averse curiosity the working jaws of the men and the motion of the muscles in their temples as they hastily gobbled the coarse fare which they cut with their clasp knives. The fire duplicated their number with their shadows, and occasionally he eyed these semblances speculatively as they stretched on the sandy ground or skulked in the underbrush behind their unconscious principals. Once or twice he lifted his own arm with an alert gesture in imitative energy, and looked over his shoulder at his squat little image, to note its obedience to his behest. One might have thought he had put the greater part of the fat meat in smears about his rosy cheeks and fresh baby lips, and certainly the pleated bosom of his immaculate linen suit had received a generous

remembrance. The remnant was still in his hand when he began to nod in the drowsy influences of the heat of the fire, and he had collapsed into insensibility long before the coals were raked apart to dull and die. He had no knowledge of the fact when he was borne away in the arms of Holvey, who had been delegated to assume charge of him now, and who sulked in disaffection under the responsibility and his doubts of the success of their plan.

Once more in the boat, the chill of the dank river atmosphere awakened little Archie. He sent forth a peevish, imperative call, "Mamma!" so shrill and constraining, reaching so far across the dark water, that a hand before his lips smothered its iteration in his throat. "Bee-have!" Holvey hissed in his ear, and as the child struggled into a sitting posture his involuntary bleat, "Mamma!" was so meekened by fear and plaintive recollection and submissive helplessness that it could scarcely have been distinguished a boat's length distant.

The moon was down, but the morning star was in the sky, splendid, eloquent, charged with a subtle message expressed in no other sidereal scintillation, heralding not only the dawn, but palpitant with the prophecy and the assurance of eternal day. There was a sense of light about the eastern mountains, albeit so heavily looming. And suddenly, all at once, the faces of the shadowy men who had borne him hither were fully revealed, and as he sat and shivered in his thin little dress he eyed them, first one for a long time, and then another, and he shivered throughout with a fear more chilly than the cold. Perhaps it was well for the equilibrium of his reason that fear so acute could not continue. He presently began to cough, and when he sought to reply to a question he could only wheeze. An infantile captive wields certain coercions to fair treatment peculiar to nonage. The moonshiners had suddenly before their eyes the menace of croup or pneumonia, and, to do them justice, the destruction of the child had not been part of their project. There ensued gruff criminations and recriminations among them before the baby was rolled up in a foul old horse-blanket, and a dose of the pure moonshine whisky, tempered with river water, was poured down his throat. It may have been the slumber induced by this potent elixir, or it may have been the effects of fever, but he was not conscious when they reached the forks of the Tennessee and were pulling up the Oconalufty River. He only knew vaguely when once more they had disembarked, though now and then he sought vainly to rouse himself to the incidents of a long march. Finally he was still and silent so long in old Clenk's arms as to excite immediate fears. Now and again as they forged along at the extreme limit of their endurance they took the time to shake up the poor baby and seek by suggestion to induce him to say that he felt better. But his head had begun to roll heavily from side to side, and they could see in the light of the waning moon that he looked at them

with uncomprehending eyes, and, left to himself, sank immediately into the stupor that simulated slumber.

"Fellows," said old Clenk drearily, "I believe this leetle chap be agoin' ter make a die of it!"

But he was still alive the following morning when the chill, clouded day broke, and a happy thought occurred to old Clenk. Throughout his illness the child had instinctively refused the coarse food proffered him, and this was brought anew to their notice when they paused to eat their scanty rations in a deep, secluded dell. A stream ran foaming, crystal clear, amidst great rocks hemming it in on every side, save where a jungle of undergrowth made close to the marge. A sudden sound from these bosky recesses set every nerve of the fugitives a-quiver. Only the tinkle of a cow-bell, keen and clear in the chill rare air! There was the exchange of a sheepish grin as the tones were recognized, when suddenly Clenk arose, a light as of inspiration on his dull old face. "Soo, cow, soo!" he called softly; then listened intently for a responsive stir in the bushes. A muttered low—and he pressed into the covert in the direction of the sound. The docile animal lifted her head at an approach, then calmly fell a-grazing again. She let down her milk readily, though looking over her shoulder questioningly during the process, for Clenk was no practised hand. He contrived, however, to fill a "tickler" in which there was a small residue of whisky, which possibly aided its efficacy, for the child was perceptibly revived after the first draught was forced down his throat, and when an hour or two afterward the bottle was put to his lips he voluntarily drank a few swallows with obvious relish.

"Ye leetle old toper," cried Clenk delightedly, waxing jocose in his relief, "ye been swindling me! Ye hev been playin' sick to trick me out 'n this fine milk punch!"

Archie did not comprehend the banter, but he smiled feebly in response to the jovial tone, and after a time babbled a good deal in a faint little voice about a train of steam-cars, exponent of a distant civilization, that with a roar of wheels and clangor of machinery and scream of whistles and clouds of smoke went thundering through the wild and wooded country. To the old man's delight, he sought to lift himself to a sitting posture in Clenk's arms, and asked if they were to travel soon on the "choo-choo train." Yes, indeed, he was assured, and he seemed to experience a sort of gratified pride in the prospect. With this fiction in mind, he presently fell into a deep and refreshing slumber.

Suddenly the child was all himself again, glad, hopeful, expectant, with the sense of being once more under a roof, touched by a woman's hand. Then he looked keenly into the face before him—such a strange face! He was tempted to cry out in terror; but the mind is plastic in early youth: he had learned the lesson that now his protests and shrieks

availed naught. A strange face, of a copper hue, with lank black hair hanging straight on both sides, a high nose, a wide, flat, thin-lipped mouth, and great, dark, soft eyes amidst many wrinkles. He could not have thus enumerated its characteristics, nor even tabulated its impression on his mind; but he realized its fundamental difference from all the faces he had ever seen, and its unaccustomed aspect appalled him. He was petrified by his uncomprehending amazement and an intensity of grief that was not meet for his tender years in this extreme. He could hardly realize his own identity. It did not seem himself, this child on the floor in front of a dull wood fire, squalid, wrapped in an old horse-blanket, facing this queer woman, sitting opposite him on the uneven flagging of the hearth.

All at once his fortitude gave way. He broke forth into sobs and cries; his heart was heavy with the sense of desertion, for he wept not for his home, his mother, his kind friends, Ned and Gad-ish—on these blessings he had lost all hold, all hope. He mourned for his late companions, forsooth!—the big men, the boat, the river, the star. They had so cruelly forsaken him, and here he was so poignantly unfamiliar and helpless. When the woman held out a finger to him and smiled, he bowed his head as he wept and shook it to and fro that he might not see her, for her yellow teeth had great gaps among them, and as she laughed a strange light came into her eyes, and he was woe—woe!—for his comrades of the rowlocks and the Tennessee River.

It would have seemed a strange face to others as well as to the poor baby. For this was indeed an Indian woman. A late day, certainly, for a captive among the Cherokees, but the moonshiners felt that they had scored a final victory when they left the little creature within the Qualla Boundary, the reservation where still lingers a remnant of that tribe, the "Eastern Band," on the North Carolina side of the Great Smoky Mountains, a quaint survival of ancient days amidst the twentieth century. The moonshiners had represented the little boy as the son of one of their party, recently a widower. They stated that they were seeking work among the laborers employed in a certain silver mine beyond the Qualla Boundary, and that they had lost his kit with the rest of his clothes in the Oconalufy River hard by. Leaving some goods, purchased at a cross-roads store on the way, to supply this need, with a small sum of money for his board in advance, and fixing an early day for their return, they departed.

Their story excited no suspicion at Quallatown: the craft of the Cherokees is an antiquated endowment, and has not kept pace with modern progress. Even the woman, who arrogated a spirit of prophecy and had long practised the devices of a fortune-teller, thus accustomed to scan the possibilities and in some degree versed in the adjustment of the probabilities, accorded the homely verisimilitude of their worldly-wise

representations the meed of a simple and respectful credulity. The mountaineers were ignorant indeed in their sort, but far too sophisticated to entertain aught but the most contemptuous disbelief in her pretensions of special foresight and mysterious possessions. They did not fear her discrimination, and told their story, through an interpreter, with a glib disregard of any uncanny perspicacity on her part. She was one of the many Indians of the reservation who speak no English. Her cabin was far from Quallatown, and indeed at a considerable distance from any other dwelling. With her and her few associates, the moonshiners thought the child would soon forget his name, his language, and his terrible experience, and they promised themselves that when all was buried in oblivion they would come and reclaim him and place him more suitably among themselves, and see to it that he should have some chance, some show in the world to make a man of himself. All of this had served to soothe the vague pricks of conscience, which from time to time had harassed them as the attractions of the child began to make their impress even on their indurated hearts, and all was forgotten by the time they caught the first glimpse of the red clay embankment of the new railroad, crawling across the valley country far away in one of the adjoining States; for they sought employment in the construction gangs here, and the silver mines of their pretended destination held all its treasures unmolested for any pick or shovel of their wielding.

VII.

THE discovery of the catastrophe came late to the inmates of the bungalow on the crag. The suave resplendent sunset drew slowly to a majestic close. The color deepened and glowed in the red west, even while the moon made speed to climb the eastern mountains. Long burnished silver shafts were all aslant in the woods, the dense autumnal foliage still visibly russet and yellow, before Mrs. Briscoe came out on the veranda where Bayne lounged in the swing, although no longer able to scan the pages of the magazine in his hand.

"Don't you think it is odd that Ned is so late?" she asked.

"I don't know his habit," he rejoined carelessly. "But it is almost as light as day in the road."

"He is usually so particular about detaining the servants," she said uneasily, evidently a bit disconcerted. "Dinner has been ready to serve for nearly an hour."

She returned indoors after a little, but Bayne still swung languidly to and fro, all unprescient of the impending disclosure. Presently he glanced through the window of the hall near at hand, noting how the tints of the pretty gowns of the two women now before the fire imparted a rich pictorial effect to the interior, the one costume being of a canary

tint, with bretelles and girdle of brown velvet, while Mrs. Briscoe's striking beauty was accented by the artistic blending of two blues. In the interval, while his attention was diverted from the scene without, a change had supervened there, and he experienced a sudden disquieting monition as he observed that the groom, who had been hovering in the road at some distance, had been joined by another stable-man, and that the butler, easily distinguishable from the others in the gathering gloom by his white shirt front, was swiftly crossing the lawn toward them. Bayne sprang from the swing, leaped silently from the veranda into the grass, and walked quickly toward the group. They had already descried his approach, and eagerly met him half way—in a state verging on panic, he found to his own fright and dismay.

Something had happened, they averred. Mr. Briscoe was never late like this. He had too much consideration for his household. He would not risk occasioning Mrs. Briscoe's anxiety. He would not keep little Archie out in the night air—he was very particular about little Archie. Oh, Fairy-foot was all right—there was not a horse in Tennessee that Mr. Briscoe could not handle. They had no fear at all about the mare. But after Mr. Briscoe had driven away, the groom who had been ordered to investigate the hotel had found signs of intrusion in the vacant building. Broken victuals were on the hearth of the serving-room adjoining the great dining-hall, and an old slouched hat was lying in that apartment, evidently dropped inadvertently near one of the tables. A rude lantern with a candle burned down almost to the socket was in an upper chamber, usually illuminated by acetylene gas, as was all the building. Bayne remembered, according to the circumstance a fresh and added importance, the fleeing apparition in the vacant hotel that had frightened Lillian, and Mrs. Briscoe's declaration that a light had flashed the previous night from the interior of the deserted building. But this intrusion was not necessarily of inimical significance, he argued. Tramps, perhaps, or some belated hunter stealing a shelter from the blinding fog, or even petty thieves, finding an unguarded entrance—it might mean no more. In fact, such intrusion was the normal incident of any vacant house in remote seclusion, unprotected by a care-taker. But this reasoning did not convince the servants. Something had happened, they reiterated; something terrible had happened!

Bayne, flouting fear as a folly, yet himself feeling the cold chill of dismay, dared not dismiss their anxieties as groundless. He hastily arranged for a patrol of the only road by which Briscoe could return, incongruously feeling at the moment absurd and shamefaced in view of his host's indignation and ridicule should he presently appear. Bayne had ordered the phaeton with the intention of himself rousing the country-side and organizing a search when, to his consternation, the two ladies, who had observed the colloquing group, issued on the veranda,

frantic with terror, pale and agonized. Both had grasped the fact of disaster, albeit unformulated, yet both hoped against hope.

"Take me with you!" Lillian cried, seizing Bayne's wrist in a grip like steel. "Take me to my child!"

He could not be rid of her importunacy, and he came to think it was well that the two should be separated, for Mrs. Briscoe had not abandoned all self-control, and her gallant struggle for composure appealed for his aid.

"No," she had said firmly; "Ned would expect me to wait for him here. Dead or alive, he will come back to me here."

He was glad to get Lillian out of her sight and hearing. With every muscle relaxed, almost collapsed, curiously ghastly in her gay gown, she was lifted bodily into the vehicle, repeating constantly with bloodless lips and a strange, false, mechanical voice, "Take me to my dead child!"

Once as they spun swiftly through the misty sheen and dewy shadow, the moisture-laden boughs that thrust across the narrow roadway now and again filliping them on the cheeks with perfumed silver showers, she turned that death-smitten face toward him and said in her natural, smooth tones, "You have your revenge at last. It could n't be a heavier blow!"

"I want you to be still!" he cried, with vehement rudeness. "I can't drive straight if you rattle me. I am taking you to your child."

And once more broke forth the eerie shrilling anew: "Take me to my child! Take me to my dead child!"

At the first house that Bayne roused, he was encumbered and harassed by her strange intolerance that they should speak of Briscoe at all; for the summer sojourner was a favorite with his humble neighbors, and a great tumult of concern ensued on the suggestion that he had encountered disaster in some sort.

It all seemed to the jealous mother-heart to minimize her own sacred grief. "But he had my child with him, my dead child!" she would shrill out. And the slow rustic's formulation of a suggestion or a plan must needs tarry in abeyance as he gazed awestruck at this ghastly apparition, decked in trim finery, mowing and wringing her hands, shown under the hood of the phaeton in the blended light of the moon and the mountaineer's lantern, while his household stood half-clad in the doorway and peered out, mute and affrighted, as at a spectre.

The scanty population of the district turned out to the last man. The woods of the vicinity were pervaded with exploring parties, now and again hallooing their signals, till the crags rang with the melancholy interchange of hail and hopeless response. In fact, the night was nearly spent before a hunter, roused by the echoing clamors, joined the search with the detail that he had been at a "deer stand" in the valley during the afternoon, and had noted at a distance some object crash down from

the summit of a certain crag. He had fancied it only a fragment of the rock falling, and had not the curiosity to leave his occupation and go so far to investigate the nature of a circumstance seemingly of so little significance.

Thus it came about that the inquisition of the coroner's jury resulted in a verdict of death by accident. It was supposed that the little child's body was crushed indistinguishably in the mangled mass of horse and man, themselves scarcely to be disintegrated in the fall from so stupendous a height. The big white beaver hat of the child was found floating on the surface of a deep pool hard by, half quagmire, half quicksand, and would in itself have sufficed to dispel any doubts of his fate, had doubt been entertained. The burial was accomplished as best might be, and the dolorous incident seemed at an end. But throughout the dry, soft Indian summer the little boy's jaunty red coat swung in the wind, unseen, unheeded, on the upper boughs of a tree in the valley, where it had chanced to lodge when the treacherous Copenny had cast it forth from the bluff above, to justify the hypothesis of the fall of the little fellow from those awful heights.

Gradually the catastrophe ceased to be the paramount sensation of the country-side. Bayne's interests of necessity had drawn him back to his city office. He had remonstrated against the decision of the two bereaved women to remain in the bungalow for a time. He had advocated change, travel, aught that might compass a surcease of the indulgence of sorrow and dreary reminiscence, that are so dear and so pernicious to the stricken heart. But in their affliction the two clung together, and to the place endeared by tender associations of the recent habitation of the beloved and vanished. They said that none could feel for them as each for the other, and, in fact, their awful tragedy had cemented an affection already almost sisterly. Thus the bungalow caged through the opening of wintry weather these tenants of woe who had come like the birds for sunshine and summer only. Since the community continued in absolute ignorance that any crime had been committed, there was no sense of insecurity or apprehension of danger, other than might menace any country house, isolated and secluded in situation. The normal precautions were taken, the household was strengthened, and Mrs. Marable, Lillian's aunt, or rather her uncle's wife, who had come to her at the first news of her affliction, had consented to remain during her stay. Owing to the discovery of the intrusion into the hotel, with no other fear than material injury to the property by frisky boys of the vicinity, the management had installed there a care-taker with his family, who was also, as weather favored, to superintend some repairs to the building. It had been arranged by Bayne, previous to his departure, that the eldest son, a stalwart youth of twenty, should sleep in a room at the bungalow, having his rifle loaded and pistols at hand, provided against any menace of disturb-

ance. Thus the winter closed in upon a seclusion and solitude of funereal intimations.

The winds were loosed and rioted through the lonely recesses of the craggy ravines and the valley with a wild and eerie blare; the leaves, rustling shrilly, all sere now, so long the weather had held dry, fled in myriads before the gusts. Soon they lay on the ground in dense masses, and in the denudation of the trees the brilliant tints of the little coat, swinging so high in the blast, caught the eye of a wandering hunter. At first sight, he thought it but a flare of the autumnal foliage, and gave it no heed, but some days afterward its persistence struck his attention. It seemed a tragic and piteous thing when he discovered its nature. He cut the tree down, too high it was lodged for other means to secure it, and after the county officials had examined it, he brought it to the mother.

Over it Lillian shed such tears as have bedewed the relics of the dead since first this sad old world knew loss, since first a grave was filled. How unavailing! How lacerating! How consoling! She began to feel a plaintive sympathy for all the bereaved of earth, and her heart and mind grew more submissive as she remembered that only for this cause Jesus wept, albeit a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

The little coat, so gayly decorated, reminded her of another coat of many colors, its splendor testimony of the gentlest domestic affection, brought stained with blood to another parent long ago, to interpret the cruel mystery of a son's death. And after all these centuries she felt drawn near to Jacob in the tender realization of a common humanity, and often repeated his despairing words, "I shall go down into the grave unto my son mourning."

Then her heart was pierced with self-pity for the contrast of his gratuitous affliction with her hopeless grief. So happy in truth was he, despite his thought of woe, that he should have lamented as dead his son, who was so full of life the while, whose future on earth was destined to be so long and so beneficent. She spoke of this so often and so wistfully that it seemed to Gladys to precipitate an illusion, which afterward absorbed her mind to the exclusion of all else.

VIII.

ONE sinister day when the slate-hued clouds hung low, and the valley was dark and drear with its dense leafless forests, when the mountains gloomed a sombre purple and no sound but the raucous cawing of crows broke upon the sullen air, Lillian's paroxysms of grief seemed to reach a climax. Their intensity alarmed her two companions, and the forced composure and latent strength of character of Gladys were tried to the utmost to sustain her own equilibrium. But as the afternoon wore away

Lillian grew calmer, though her mind never deviated from the subject. The trio had ceased to sit in the large reception hall, for its gun-rack and rods and reels, its fur rugs, its trophies of sport, its mandolin and flute and piano, were now pathetically reminiscent of the vanished presence of its joyous and genial owner. They used instead the small library which opened from it, where a spacious bay-window gave ample light in the dreary days, and the big wood fire sent its flash and fragrance to the remotest corner. It filled with a rich glow the fabric of the little red coat as the mother held the sleeve to her lips and then turned it to readjust the cuff creased in folding. "He used to look so pretty in it. My beauty! My baby! My own!" she cried out in a voice muffled, half-smothered, by her choking throat. "And he thought it so fine! He valued it beyond all his other possessions," she continued presently with a melancholy smile, even while the tears, so bitter that they stung her cheeks, coursed down her face; for she had begun to find a languid, sad pleasure now and then in discursive reminiscence, and Gladys, who knew the little fellow so well, could respond with discretion and stimulate this resource for the promotion of calm and resignation. "You remember, Gladys, don't you, how he delighted in these pockets? You were with me when he first got the coat. He doubted if he were really going to have pockets, because there were none in his little white reefer. Do you remember how he looked when I lifted the flap—isn't the embroidery lovely?—and put his dear little hand into his first pocket? How surprised he was when I showed him this pocket between the facing and the lining! I wanted him to have enough pockets—he admired them so. He had never dreamed of finding one here. I told him it was his inside pocket—he called it his 'shy pocket.'"

"A good name for it, too," commented Gladys. "Nobody would ever think to find a pocket there."

Lillian had suddenly ceased to speak. She had suited the action to the word and slipped her own fingers into the pocket. There was something within. She drew it forth, startled, her pale face all contorted and ghastly. It was a bit of stone, of white stone, fashioned by curious nature in the similitude of a lily, wrought in the darkness, the silence, of the depths of the earth. Lillian had previously seen such things; she recognized the efflorescence of a limestone cavern. She sprang up suddenly with a scream that rang through the room with the force and volume of a clarion tone.

"This child has been in a cave!" she shrieked, remembering the raid on the moonshiners' cavern. "He is not dead. He is stolen, *stolen!*"

The logic of the possibilities, cemented by her renewal of frantic hope, had constructed a stanch theory. She was reasoning on its every phase. The coercion of this significant discovery had suggested the truth. "This

coat was left as a blind, a bluff, to cover the tracks of a crime. Gladys, Gladys, think—*think!*”

But poor Gladys, in her deep mourning gown, all her splendid beauty beclouded by grief, sadly shook her head, unconvinced. The child had possibly found the stone, she argued.

“Would he not have shared his joy with every creature in the household?” demanded Lillian. “Did he ever have a thought that I did not know?”

“It might have been given to him,” Gladys sadly persisted.

“Remember his disposition, Gladys, his grateful little heart. He would have worn us all out, showing the gift and celebrating the generosity of the giver. How flattered he was always to be considered! He never seemed in the least to care for the value of the thing. He would cherish an empty spool from a friend’s hand. It was wonderful how he loved to be loved. I feel sure, I *know*, that coat was taken from him; and he is alive, *stolen*.”

And from this conviction she would not depart. It was a folly, a frenzy, her two friends contended. Its indulgence would threaten her sanity. They besought her to consider anew. The discovery of such a stone in this mountain region was altogether devoid of significance. Right reason and religion alike dictated submission to the decrees of Providence.

These arguments were all thrown away. Neither could urge aught to restrain her. With a swift strength of gait that seemed amazing to those who had witnessed her feeble dragging about the house for months past, Lillian flashed through the door, and suddenly there was the keen tinkle of a bell in the darkening, chill spaces of the unused hall. The other two, startled, appalled, as in the contemplation of the aberrations of acute mania, scarcely knowing whether to follow or to call for help, remained motionless, gazing at each other in pallid agitation, awaiting developments, of which they could divine naught.

Lillian, however, was perfectly calm as she called up “Long Distance” and gave the address of Julian Bayne in the city of Glaston—the number of his office and his residence as well.

The two women in the firelight glanced at each other in mute significance. Then Lillian urged the operator at Shaftesville to the utmost diligence. “Find him wherever he is. Send special messenger. Get him to the ’phone at once. Emergency call! Make them understand that at the Glaston exchange.”

Mrs. Marable, a little, precise, wrinkled old lady, with a brown taffeta gown and a Marie Stuart lace cap, cherished the traditions of the old school of propriety, and the controlling influence proved strong even amidst this chaos of excitements. As Mrs. Royston returned in a state of absolute exaltation to the fireside, “Lillian,” said Mrs. Marable coldly,

"the officers of the law are the proper parties for you to appeal to, if you are going to pursue this obsession. Why should you call up that—man? Why don't you call the sheriff of the county?"

"Because I want Julian Bayne. I believe in him! I can trust him! It is almost like the hand of omnipotence—there is help in the very thought of him."

There were no more tears. She sat strong, elate, her head held high, her hands folded calmly on the crape pleats of the black gown she wore for the child's sake, ready to wait the evening through. But there was a prompt response. When the telephone-bell jarred out suddenly in the dim stillness of the hall, Gladys sprang up with a sharp cry, her hands to her ears, as if to shut out the sound. But Lillian ran lightly out of the room, and the two heard in wonder the sure vibrations of her clear composed accents. "Yes, Long Distance, this is Mrs. Royston." Then suddenly her tones were pervaded with embarrassment: "Oh, Mr. *John* Bayne. . . . Oh, the father of Mr. Julian Bayne. . . . No, no, no commands. . . . Thank you very much. Only the present address of Mr. Julian Bayne."

Once more the two in the library exchanged a glance expressive of more than either would have been willing to put into words. For there was a very definite interval of delay at the telephone, and it would need no sorcerer to divine that the father might deem that this lady, who had so signally befooled his son heretofore, had no beneficent concern to serve with his address. But the old gentleman was evidently the pink of punctilio. Moreover, Julian Bayne had already proved himself man enough to be safely chargeable with his own affairs.

"At Crystal? . . . Thirty miles from Shaftesville? . . . Telephone exchange there? . . . So much obliged! Good-by!"

The bitter disappointment! The torturing delay! Gladys dreaded to witness their effects on Lillian, baffled at the outset in this miserable delusion that her child still lived, because of a bit of stone in the pocket of a coat he had worn. It would debilitate her as completely as if her belief were founded on cogent reason. But Lillian, with a singularly fresh aspect, with a buoyant energy, swept into the room after calling up Crystal, cool, collected, as competent of dealing with delay and suspense as factors in her plan as if it were some commonplace matter of business, and naturally dependent on the contingencies which environ the domain of affairs. The lamps came in and filled the room with a golden glow, as she sat in a majestic assurance that gave her an aspect of a sort of regal state. Her hair, ill-arranged, disordered in lying down throughout the day in her reclining chair, showed in its redundancy the splendor of its tint and quality; her face, lately so wan and lean and ghastly, was roseate, and the lines had strangely filled out in soft curves to their wonted contours; her hands lay supple and white and quiet in her lap,

with not a tense ligament, not a throbbing fibre—delicate, beautiful hands—it seemed odd to her companions to think how they had seen her wring them in woe and clench them in despair. Her black gown with its heavy folds of crape had an element of incongruity with that still, assured, resolved presence, expressing so cheerful a poise, so confident a control of circumstance. She did not expend herself in protest when at ten o'clock they besought her to go to bed, to be called should the telephone-bell ring. Her negation was so definite that they forbore futile importunacy. She did not even waste her strength in urgency when they declared that they would keep the vigil with her. She merely essayed a remonstrance, and, since it was obviously vain, she desisted. She would not discuss the theme. She had no words. It even seemed that she had no thoughts, no fears, no plans. She was annulled in waiting—waiting for the moment, the opportunity to take action. While the hours went by, she sat there as under a spell of suspended animation, fresh, clear, capable, tireless, silent. The housemaid came in once and mended the fire, but later Gladys, mindful of the curiosity of servants, forbore to ring the bell and threw on the logs herself; then sat down to gaze again into the depths of the coals, flickering to a white heat at the end of the glowing red perspective, and wonder what was to come to them all—indeed, what was this strange thing that had already befallen them in the obsession of this silent woman, who sat so still, so suddenly endued with vigor, so brilliant with health and freshness, out of a state of mental anguish bordering on nervous prostration? Was it all fictitious?—and was there something terrible to ensue when it should collapse? And what action was incumbent on her, left to face this problem in this lonely country house in the dead hours of night?

IX.

THE wind had risen; the swaying of the great trees outside was partially visible as well as drearily audible to the group, for Gladys had postponed ordering the shutters closed, and then had forgotten them. The gigantic dim shapes of the oaks surged to and fro in an indiscriminated shadowy turmoil. It was a dark night, and cloudy. Vast masses of vapor were on the march, under the coercion of the blast that followed fast and scourged and flouted the laggards. Mrs. Marable noted now and again a light and tentative touch on the panes, and began to wonder how far the illumined window could be seen down the road. Was it not calculated to allure marauders and night-hawks to this lonely house? She was moved to hope that the stalwart son of the hotel caretaker, who occupied a room at the bungalow for the greater security of its occupants, was not a heavy sleeper; though from the stolid, phlegmatic appearance of the young man, of a sluggish temperament, she drearily

thought it possible that he could be roused by no less means than applying a torch to his bed furniture to bring him out in a light blaze. She experienced a great revulsion of relief when she began to recognize the mysterious sound that had attracted her attention. It was sleet—no longer slyly touching the glass here and there, but dashing with all the force of the wind in tinkling showers against it. The sound had its chilly influence even before the warm fire.

Suddenly the shock of the bell, jangling out its summons in the dark cold hall! Again Lillian's composed, swift exit in response. Crystal had answered, and here was Mr. Julian Bayne at the hotel and on the wire. Could he come to her at once, at her utmost need, and by the first train? Oh! (at last a plangent cadence of pain) there was no train? Crystal was not on a railroad at all? A pause of silent, listening expectancy, then the keen vibration of renewed hope. Oh, could he? Could he really drive across country? But was n't it too far? Oh, a fast horse? Fifty miles? But were n't the roads dreadful?

"Oh—oh, Gladys, he has rung off! He was in such a hurry I could hardly understand him. I could hear him calling out his orders in the hotel office to have his horse harnessed, while he was talking to me."

The effort was triumphantly made, and Julian Bayne was coming, but as she returned from the chill hall to the illumined, warm room the tinkle of ice on the window-pane caught her attention for the first time.

"Snow?" she said, appalled; then, listening a moment: "And there is sleet! I wonder if it is more than a flurry."

She ran to the window, but, already frozen, the sash refused to rise. She pressed her cheek to the pane and beheld aghast a ghostly and sheeted world, so fast had the snow-flakes fallen, and still the sleet sent its crystal fusillade against the glass.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "Julian Bayne can never come safely through this ice storm and up the mountain. Listen—listen! It is hailing now! Oh, he will break his neck! Remember what a wild and savage thing it is that Julian Bayne calls a fast horse! He will lose his way in the woods and freeze to death; and after all, it is perhaps for nothing. I can wait—I can wait—time is not *so* essential. Oh, I will postpone his coming! I will call him up again! Run, Gladys, ring the bell! Call up Long Distance! I can't get there quickly enough."

And indeed it seemed some feeble old woman hirpling through the shadows, rather than the vigorous and commanding presence of a few minutes ago. Gladys felt that the reaction was ominous as Lillian held the receiver with a hand that shook as with the palsy. All had feared the usual delay, but while they were still in the hall the bell jangled, and the night-clerk of the hotel in Crystal responded—little to a cheering effect to the listener, though of this he was unaware. Mr. Bayne had already set out, he stated glibly. He must be five miles away by this

time (the clerk evidently thought that he pleased his interlocutor by his report of the precipitation with which Mr. Bayne had obeyed her summons). Mr. Bayne was a good judge of horse-flesh, and the clerk would venture to say that he had never handled the ribbons over a higher-couraged animal than the one he had between the shafts to-night. Pretty well matched, horse and driver—ha, ha, ha! If anything could get through the ice-storm to-night, it was those two! Oh, yes, it had been snowing hard at Crystal for two hours past.

So he rang off jauntily, fancying that Julian Bayne's presence was much desired at some house-party or romantic elopement, or other light-some diversion in the upper country.

"How could I? How could I, Gladys?" Lillian said again and again, white, wild-eyed, and haggard, so limp and nerveless that she could not have reached the library had not the other ladies supported her between them, half carrying her to her reclining chair. "You both think I was wrong, don't you?" She looked up at them with agonized eyes, pleading for reassurance.

"Well, dear, time is not an element of importance just now, it would seem, to be considered against so many other disadvantages—so many weeks have already passed. A day or two more would not have mattered," returned Mrs. Marable, fatally candid.

Once more the blast drove against the windows with elemental frenzy, shaking the sashes that, being hung loosely, rattled in their casings. No longer the dark, glossy spaces between the long red curtains reflected fragmentary bits of the bright, warm room within, or gave dull glimpses of the bosky grove and the clouded sky without. The glass was now blankly white, opaque, sheeted with ice, and only the wind gave token how the storm raged. It was indeed a wild night for a drive of fifty miles through a mountain wilderness, over roads sodden with the late rains, the deep mire corrugated into ruts by the wheels of travel and now frozen stiff.

But the roads might well be hopelessly lost under drifts of snow, and the woods were as uncharted as a trackless ocean. Many water-courses were out of their banks with the recent floods. Gladys remembered that the county paper had chronicled the sweeping away of several bridges; others were left doubtless undermined, insecure, trembling to their fall. Julian would be often constrained to trust his life to his plucky horse, swimming when out of his depth, and dragging after him, as best he might, the vehicle, heavy with its iron fixtures, and reeking with the water and the tenacious red clay mire. And then, too, the mountain streams were beset with quicksands—indeed, every detail of the night journey was environed with danger. He could scarcely be expected to win through safely, and Gladys felt a rush of indignation that he should have attempted the feat. Must a man be as wax in a woman's hands—

especially a woman whom he knew unreliable of old, who had failed him when his whole heart was bound up in her? At her utmost need, she had said, to be sure, but he had not canvassed the urgency of the necessity, he had not even asked a question! He had simply rushed forth into the blizzard. But even while she contemned his foolhardiness, she was woe for Lillian. To entertain a hope, even though the folly of illusion, as an oasis in her deep distress, a sentiment so revivifying, so potent, that it seemed to raise her as it were from the dead—and yet within the hour to be battered down by self-reproach, an anguish of anxiety, of torture, of suspense, for the fate of the man she had so arbitrarily called to her aid, to make the hope effective in the rescue of her child. Poor little Archie! It was difficult indeed to think of him as dead! Gladys felt that she must find some way to sustain Lillian.

"Why, what are we thinking of?" she exclaimed. "Julian Bayne will be half frozen when he gets here. His room must be prepared—something hot to drink, and something to eat. No, Lillian, you *must* n't ring the bell! The servants have been at work all day, and have earned their rest. We will just take this matter in charge ourselves. You go to the kitchen and see if the fire has kept in the range. If not, make it up. You will find wood at hand, laid ready for getting breakfast. Mrs. Marable, look in the refrigerator, please, and see what there is for him to eat. I will get out the bed linen and blankets, for he will be exhausted, no doubt."

But when she stood alone in the upper hall, at the door of the vacant guest-room, the candle in her hand, Gladys had a sudden keen intimation that she was herself but human, endowed with muscles susceptible of overstrain, with nerves of sensitive fibre, with instincts importunate with the cry of self-interest, with impulses toward collapse, tears, terrors, anxieties,—all in revolt against the sedulous constraint of will. The light of the candle in her hand, thrown upward on her face, showed the fictitious animation that she had sustained vanish out of its lineaments, as life itself might flicker to extinction, and leave a mask like death. It was a tragic mask. Her lids fell over her downcast eyes; her lips drooped; the flush of her splendid florid beauty had faded as if it had never bloomed. She discovered that she was gasping in the dull, chill air. She leaned against the balustrade of the stairs, limp, inert, as if every impetus of vigor had deserted her. But it would never do for her to faint, she reflected. She must act for others, with just judgment, with foresight, with effective housewifely care, and with good heart and courage.

"I must think for the rest—as Ned would, if he were here," she said, still half fainting. She got the window open hard by, and a vagrant gust of the cold air stung her face as with a lash. But it was out of the direct course of the blast as it came shrilly fluttering from

over the roof, and she could maintain her position, although she could scarcely breathe in the keen frigidity. Snow had fallen, deeper than she had ever seen. With it had come that strange quality of visibility that seems to appertain to a sheeted world like an inherent luminosity; or was it perchance some vague diffusion of light from the clouded moon, skulking affrighted somewhere in the grim and sullen purlieus of the sky? She listened, thinking to hear the stir of horses in their stalls, some sound from barn or byre, the wakening of the restless poultry, all snugly housed, but the somnolent stillness of the muffled earth continued unbroken, and only the frantic wind screamed and howled and wailed.

One sombre hour succeeded another as if the succession were endless. Long, long before there was the sense of a boreal dawn in the chill darkness, the house stood in readiness, though none came. The servants were presently astir; the fires were freshly flaring, the furniture rearranged. In view of the freeze, the gardener had seen fit to cut all the blooms in the pit to save them from blight, and a great silver bowl on the table in the hall, and the vases in the library, were filled with exotics. The fragrance oppressed Lillian in some subtle sort; the spirit of the scene was so alien to the idea of festival or function; the dim gaunt morning was of so funereal an aspect; the gathering of household companions, gloomy, silent, expectant, into one room duly set in order, was so suggestive, that the array of flowers and the heavy perfumed air gave the final significant impression of *douleur* and doom.

At the first glimpse of dawn, Gladys had dispatched a groom, well mounted and with a fresh led horse, out on the road to descry perchance some approach of Mr. Bayne, to afford assistance if this were needed. Hours went by, and still there was no news, no return of the messenger. Now and again Mrs. Briscoe sought to exchange a word with Mrs. Marable to relieve the tension of the situation; but the elder lady was flabby with fatigue; her altruistic capabilities had been tried to the utmost in this long vigil and painful excitement, which were indeed unmeet for her age and failing strength. She did not enter into the troubled prevision of Gladys, who had been furtively watching a strange absorption that was growing in Lillian's manner, a fevered light in her eyes. Suddenly, as if in response to a summons, Lillian rose, and, standing tall and erect in her long black dress, she spoke in a voice that seemed not her own, so assured, so strong, monotonous yet distinct.

"You cruel woman," she said, as if impersonally. But Gladys perceived in a moment that she had in mind her own arraignment, as if another were taxing her with a misdeed. "In this bitter black night, in this furious ice-storm, and you did not forbid it. You did not explain your need. You summoned him to risk his life, *his life*, that he might something the earlier offer his fallible opinion, perhaps worth no more than that bit of stone! You would not wait till daylight,—you would

not wait one hour. You cruel woman! Already you had the best of him, his heart, to throw away at a word as if it were naught—merely a plaything, a tawdry gaud—the best and tenderest and noblest heart that ever beat!—and for a silly quarrel, and for your peevish vanity, you consented to humiliate his honest pride and to hold him up to ridicule, jilted on his wedding-day. And but that he is so brave and genuine and fine of fibre, he would never have had the courage to hold up his head again. But even the basest of the yokels and groundlings could not make merry over the cozening of so noble a gentleman! And now, because of your faith in his magnanimity, you summon him forth in an ice-storm at your ‘utmost need,’ all careless of his suffering, at the risk of his life. And he, fool that he is, without even a question, regardless of all that has come and gone—or, more foolish still, forgiving and forgetting—obeys your behest. You have taken all he had left, you cruel woman—his life, this time, his life, *his life!*”

Gladys literally cowered under this storm of words, as if the pitiless hail had beaten on her own head. But as Lillian, her arms outstretched, her voice broken into shrill cries, rushed to the door, Mrs. Briscoe sprang forward, caught her arm, and sought to detain her. “What are you going to do, Lillian?”

“To raise the country-side, the county—to search for all that the storm and the floods and that baneful woman have left of him!”

She broke away hastily from the restraining clutch of Gladys, who, following her closely, saw her reel backward as if in shrinking affright from a shadowy figure standing in the dim hall.

X.

JULIAN BAYNE, his long coat covered with snow and jingling with icicles, his chill face scarlet with cold, his lips emitting a cloud of visible breath, his eyes intent beneath the brim of his frost-rimmed hat, stood gazing as if petrified by the strange scene he had witnessed just enacted within, the strange words he had overheard.

“What is all this?” he cried at length. “Did you think I could n’t make it?” Then to Lillian specially, as he took her hand, “Am I late?” he asked solicitously. “I made all the speed I could. I hope I have n’t killed the horse.”

He glanced over his shoulder through the open door, where he could see a bit of the snowy drive, on which the groom was slowly leading the animal, heavily blanketed, up and down before taking him to the stable. Although sobbing now and again from the stress of his exertions, the horse had evidently sustained no permanent injury.

“I came instantly,” Julian repeated. “What is it?”

“Nothing!” cried Lillian hysterically, clinging to his arm. “They all think it is *nothing*—nothing at all.”

He stared at her somewhat grimly, though evidently mystified.

"Come," he said, "let us get at the rights of this. And I'd really like a glimpse of the fire—I'm half frozen."

He threw off his overcoat, stiffened with the ice, and strode into the library and toward the blazing hearth. Mrs. Marable was suddenly roused to remember the decoction that she herself had prepared, and put the glass into his hand. But he took only a single swallow, gazing in absorption at Gladys, who had undertaken to detail the discovery of the stone in the pocket of the little red coat, and the theory that Mrs. Royston had desperately based upon it. Lillian herself was hanging her head in shame for her folly, that she should for this fantastic illusion have inflicted on this man of all men, on whom indeed she had least claim, the agony he had endured, and the peril of his life.

She could never have described the overwhelming tumult of her heart when he lifted his head at the end of the story, with a look of grave and intent pondering.

"This stone is the efflorescence of a limestone cavern, given to him, no doubt, but when and where? And how is it that you did not know it, knowing his every thought?" he said in a tense, excited voice.

Lillian was on her feet again in an instant, her eyes shining, her cheeks flushed, her voice trembling. "Oh, Julian, you think it is possible that Archie is alive! Oh, I believe it! I believe it! And the thought is like the elixir of life, like the ecstasy of heaven!"

He made no direct reply, but turned hastily to go to the telephone. "You cannot afford to lose any chance, even the most remote. The county officers must be notified, advertisements sent out, and offers of reward. There is not a moment to be wasted."

"But Gladys thinks it is a folly," cried Lillian, following him into the hall, eager to test the negative view, fearful of her trembling hope; "and my aunt is troubled for my sanity."

As he waited for the line, which was "busy," he turned and sternly surveyed her. "Why should you defer to their views, Lillian? Have n't you yet had enough of ordering your life by the standards of others? Be yourself—if you have any identity left at this late day. Rely on your own judgment, consult your own intuitions, rest on your own sense of right and justice and conscience, and you cannot err!"

"Oh, Julian!" she exclaimed in tearful amaze. "How can you say that of me—of me?"

He looked startled for one moment, as if he had spoken inadvertently, for her guidance, his inmost thought, without regard to its personal significance. Then, with a rising flush and a conscious eye, he sought to laugh off the episode. "Oh, well, I did n't mean it, you know! Only the compliments of the newly arrived." And as the bell jingled he took down the receiver with obvious relief.

In the presence of poor Gladys, for whose calamity there could be no prospect of alleviation, the subject of Briscoe's death and the child's abduction as connected therewith could not be discussed in all its bearings. Only Mrs. Marable joined Lillian in the library that afternoon when the sheriff arrived, and the mother's eager hopes were strengthened to note the serious importance he attached to the discovery of the bit of stone in the pocket of the little red coat. He was obviously nettled that it should have remained there unnoted while the garment was in his keeping, but Lillian tactfully exhibited the unusual inner pocket in the facing, the "shy pocket," which, thus located, offered some excuse for the failure to find earlier its contents. With Julian Bayne's suggestions, the officer presently hammered out a theory very closely related to the truth. The visit of the revenue officer was detailed by Bayne, and considered significant, the more since it began to be evident that Briscoe was murdered, and in his case a motive for so perilous a deed was wholly lacking. The stone lily in the child's pocket made it evident that he himself had been in the moonshiners' cavern, the only one known to the vicinity, or that the stone had been given to him by some frequenter of that den—hardly to be supposed previous to the catastrophe. In fact, the officer declared that he had reason to believe that the child was wearing the coat at the time of the tragedy, and thus it could not have been cast loosely from the vehicle at the moment when the mare had fallen from the bluff, carrying all with her. It had been restored to the locality in a clumsy effort to prove the child's death.

The officer was a big, burly man, handsome in his way, his ponderosity suggesting a formidable development of muscle rather than fat. His manner was as weighty as his appearance. He seemed as if he might have been manufactured in a tobacco factory, so was the whole man permeated by the odor of nicotine in its various forms, but he politely declined to smoke during the long and wearing consultation, even with the permission of the ladies present, and stowed away in his breast pocket the cigars that Bayne pressed upon him, as he remarked, for reference at a moment of greater leisure. Bolt upright, a heavy hand on either big-boned knee, his shaven jowl drooping in fleshy folds over his high stiff collar, he sat gazing into the fire with round, small, gray, bullet-like eyes, while the top of his bald head grew pink and shining with warmth. He had a loud, countrified voice in his normal speech, that gave an intimation of a habit of hallooing to hounds in a fox-chase, or calling the cattle on a thousand hills, but it had sunk to a mysterious undertone when he next spoke, expressive of the importance of the disclosure he was about to make.

A few days previous, he said, he had chanced to arrest an Irish mechanic who, during the season, had been employed at the neighboring hotel in replacing some plaster that had fallen by reason of leakage.

Since then, a hard drinking man, he had been idly loafing, occasionally jobbing, about the country, but the offense charged was that of being concerned in a wholesale dynamiting of fish in the Tennessee River some months ago. The man protested violently against his arrest, being unable to procure bail, and declared he could prove an alibi but for fear that a worse thing befall him. This singular statement so stimulated the officer's curiosity that his craft was enlisted to elicit the whole story. Little by little he secured its details. It seemed that on the day when the fish were dynamited contrary to law, the Irishman was some thirty miles distant up the river—the day of the Briscoe tragedy. He believed that he was the last man who had seen Briscoe alive—unless indeed he were done to death. He was afoot, walking in the county road, not more than two miles from the vacant hotel, when he saw the dog-cart coming like the wind toward him. The gentleman, who was driving a splendid mare, checked his speed on sighting him, and called out to him. Upon approaching, he recognized Mr. Briscoe, whom he had often seen when at work at the neighboring hotel. On this occasion Mr. Briscoe asked him to hold the mare while he slipped a coat on the little boy whom he had in the dog-cart with him—a red coat it was—for it took all he knew to drive the mare with both hands. And the Irishman declared it took all *he* knew to hold the mare for the single minute required to slip the child into the coat. Twice the plunging animal lifted him off his feet as he swung to the bit. But the gentleman did not forget to pay him royally. Mr. Briscoe tossed him a dollar, and then, with "the little bye in his red coat" sitting on the floor of the vehicle, he was off like a cyclone and out of sight in a moment. Almost immediately afterward the Irishman heard the sharp crack of a rifle, and a tumultuous crash, as of some heavy fall into the depths of the valley. To his mind, the sound of the weapon intimated some catastrophe, and he said nothing at the time as to his meeting with Mr. Briscoe. That circumstance seemed to him of no importance. He was afraid of being numbered among the suspects if any ill-deed had been done. He heard the searching parties out all night, and it was a terrible sound! It was too aisy for a poor man to be laid by the heels for a job he niver done, bedad, as was the case at present. He permitted himself, however, to be persuaded to let a charge of vagrancy be entered against him and go to jail, really to be held as a witness in the event of more developments in the Briscoe case; for the authorities desired that no arrests in that connection should be made public until the significance of the fact that at the time of the tragedy the child was wearing the coat—afterward found hanging loose, without a rent or a blemish, to the tree in the valley—should be fully exploited. If it were indeed a direful instance of murder and abduction, as the sheriff now believed, he wished the miscreants to rest unwitting of the activity of the officers and the menace of discovery.

"But it seems a pity for the poor innocent Irishman to have to stay in jail. How good of him to consent!" exclaimed Mrs. Marable pathetically.

The sheriff was all unacclimated to the false sentimentality of fashionable circles. His literal eyebrows went up to an angle of forty-five degrees; he turned his belittling eyes on Mrs. Marable, as if she were a very inconsiderable species of wren, suddenly developing a capacity for disproportionate mischief. "Not at all, madam," he made haste to say. "He can be legally held for a witness, lest he get away and out of reach of a subpoena. It is the right of the State, and of Mrs. Briscoe as well, who will doubtless join the public prosecution. We are asking nothing of nobody, and taking nothing off nobody, neither."

"But I should like," said Lillian, the contagion of a morbid altruism being easily transmitted, "to arrange that he shall suffer no hardship. I shall be happy to defray any expense to make him thoroughly comfortable."

The sheriff looked down on feminine intelligence. The law was exclusively man's affair. He made it and administered it. The officer had seldom known women to intrude into it, save to get the worst of it. Its minister had an air of burly ridicule that trenched on contempt as he broke into a laugh of great relish.

"The county can accommodate its boarders without your help, Mrs. Royston. Much obliged, all the same. He ain't no nice customer. He is mighty lucky to be sure of his grub and fire and shelter this tough winter. He ain't got to do any work. He has the freedom of the yard and the halls and the office at all hours. No, madam, he is as snug as a bug in a rug. You'll have a chance to spend all the money that you care to put up in this affair, if I'm not mightily mistaken. No use in wastin' any of it on Micky."

The fact that the child had not been wearing the coat when starting on the drive, but had been seen in it immediately previous to the catastrophe; that it should be subsequently found and not on his body, of which no trace had ever been discovered, went far to convince the authorities that the garment had been restored to the locality afterward in pursuance of an effort to prove his death. They had begun to believe that the child had in some manner escaped at the time of the tragedy, and was now held in retreat lest he disclose incriminating evidence. But it was a barren triumph of logic. They realized that any demand of the reward offered must needs bring a counter inquiry concerning the facts of Briscoe's murder, and therefore from the beginning they had little hope that any good result would ensue from the wide publicity and the extended search that his mother and her adviser had inaugurated. The child remained as if caught up in the clouds. Though extravagant offers of reward for any information concerning him, as well as for his ultimate

recovery, were scattered broadcast throughout the country; though every clue, however fantastic or tenuous or obviously fraudulent, was as cautiously examined as if it really held the nucleus of discovery; though fakers and cheats of preposterous sorts harassed the proceedings and wrought many malevolent bits of mischief in disappointed revenge, being treated with a leniency which would suffer aught, all, rather than clog any vague chance of a revelation of the seclusion of the lost child—there seemed no prospect, no hope.

It had been Lillian's instinct to continue in the place where the child had been last seen—she felt a fictitious sense of proximity in the familiar localities that had known him. But with the exigencies of the systematic effort for his recovery she returned to her own home in the city of Glaston, whither Gladys accompanied her, as being more accessible when her presence in the search was required.

Julian Bayne gave himself wholly to the effort. He travelled here and there, pervading the country like some spirit of unrest, threading the intricacies of city slums, north, south, east, and west, personally interviewing all manner of loathly creatures, damaged by vice and sloth and ignorance and crime almost out of all semblance of humanity. He had not dreamed that such beings existed upon the earth. Sometimes, unaware of the circumstances and the danger they courted, they caught up a child wherewith to deceive him, if it might be, generally a pitiable, puny thing, swarming with vermin, half famished and forlorn. But Julian was dubious how ill treatment and lack of nourishment might have transformed the heir of the proud Archibald Royston, and in each instance he summoned Lillian through long journeys, tortured with alternations of hope and suspense, to inspect the waif. All without avail. True she invariably bettered the condition of the little creature, thus fortunate in attracting her notice, purveying clothes and food, and paying a good round price for the consent of its keepers to place it in some orphanage or other juvenile refuge. So exhaustive, so judicious, so tireless, was the search, so rich the reward, that as time went by and no result ensued, the authorities became more than ever convinced that since the child's abduction was complicated with the more desperate crime of Briscoe's murder, this effectually precluded any attempt at his restoration by the kidnappers; for indeed, to those who knew the facts, the large reward was obviously the price of a halter. As this theory gained strength, their ardor in the search declined, and both Lillian and Julian realized that more than ever the child's restoration would depend on their individual exertions.

The effort came to seem an obsession on the part of Bayne. He was worn and weary; his business interests languished, and his friends, remonstrating in vain, regarded it as the culminating injury to his life and prospects already wrought by the influence of this woman.

Indeed, one of the chief difficulties of the continuance of the enterprise was the resistance they must needs maintain to the remonstrances of friends. This finally came to be so urgent that it even involved an effort to circumscribe the futile activities. The executor of Mr. Royston's will declined to furnish any portion of the minor's estate to defray the extremely lavish expenses that the thoroughness and extent of search necessitated. He took this course on the score that he had no authority for this application of the funds in his keeping, and that, should the minor ever come to his own, he would be personally responsible for all unwarranted expenditure. Mrs. Royston did not even seek to combat this resolution, but applied to the deficit money from her own share of her husband's estate. Then came her uncle, Mr. Marable, into the discussion. Her resources would not sustain these heavy draughts, he argued. In case the child remained perdu, to be sure, and the legal presumption of his death obtain by reason of the lapse of time, his estate would by the terms of the will vest in her, and thus financially all might be well. But on the contrary, should he be found in the course of time, this wild extravagance would result in bankrupting her. She thought it necessary to keep detectives in constant pay to hold their efforts and interest to the search, even though the ultimate rich reward were dangled continually before their eyes. The flamboyant advertisements, the widespread publicity over half the world, had involved commensurate cost. Large sums had been disbursed for information merely that was rooted in error and bore only disappointment. Then, too, were the inevitable mistakes, the fakes and cheats, and the expenses of a score of agents effecting nothing. Mr. Marable rubbed the wisps of gray hair on either side of his corrugated temples, and wrung his solvent hands in financial anguish.

He sought in this cause to take advantage of Bayne's influence with Lillian, and made an effort to induce him to remonstrate with her. They were in the library of her house in Glaston, looking over some papers together, a real estate mortgage, in fact, by which Lillian intended to raise a large sum for more unrestricted use in the extension of the search.

Bayne sat at the table, scanning the money-lender's memoranda, his experience as a broker having developed a keen scent for any untoward or mischievous detail.

"But in seeking the wisest methods of economy, the essential opportunity may escape her. While she is financiering, the child may die in the hands of his abductors, or he may succumb to hardship otherwise—be disfigured by disease or disabled by exposure, or slaughtered, so to speak, mentally or morally, or spirited away and be heard of never again. No, no," Bayne declared definitely; "I could not advise her to consider money in this connection."

Mr. Marable could ill brook contradiction or dissent. He quivered with more than the infirmities of age as he stood by the table, supporting himself on his cane.

"You don't reflect, Mr. Bayne, that though she gets the child's estate if he dies or continues lost—if he lives and this expenditure goes on, she will be penniless—you don't realize that. She will be a poor woman—she will have nothing left of her provision as a widow."

"Well, that suits me to the ground," Bayne retorted unexpectedly. "I shall be glad to profit as little as possible by Mr. Royston's property."

The notary public, come to take Mrs. Royston's acknowledgment, was announced at the moment, and the two gentlemen, still wrangling, went into the reception room to meet him. Mrs. Marable, her eternal Battenberg in her hands, looked up through the meshes of a perplexity, as visible as if it were a veritable network, at Gladys, who was standing in the recess of the bay-window, a book in her hand.

"I did n't understand that remark of Mr. Bayne's as to the poverty of Mr. Royston's widow," the old lady submitted.

Gladys, the match-maker, laughed delightedly. "*I did!*" she cried triumphantly.

As she went out of the room, she encountered Lillian in the hall, summoned to sign and acknowledge the papers. The flush on the cheek of Gladys, the triumph in her eyes, the laugh in the curves of her beautiful lips, arrested Mrs. Royston's attention. "What are you laughing about?" she asked, in a sort of plaintive wonderment.

"About something that Julian said just now."

"What was it?" Lillian queried, still bewildered in a sort.

The flush deepened on Mrs. Briscoe's cheek, her eyes were full of light, her voice chimed with a sort of secret joy.

"I will not tell you!" she cried, and, still smiling, she floated down the hall, her book in her hand.

Lillian stood motionless in amaze. Something that Julian Bayne had said to work this metamorphosis! Something that she must not hear, must not know! The look in her friend's eyes, the tone of her voice, stayed with Lillian in every moment of surcease of torment for the child's rescue, and worked their own mission of distress. Had she thought indeed that she could hold Julian Bayne's heart through all vicissitudes of weal and woe, of time and change? She had of her own free choice thrown it away once as a thing of no worth. She had never justified her course, or thought it could be deemed admirable as an exponent of her character. And here she was day and night contrasted with a woman who had no fault, no foible, who was generous, whole-souled, splendid, and beautiful, already with a strong hold on his affections, close to him, the widow of his cousin who was always the friend of his heart. And so sweet she was, so unconscious of any thought of

rivalry! That night she came late to Lillian's room to say good-night once more, to counsel hope, and urge an effort to sleep. Even when she seemed gone at last, she opened the door again to blow a kiss and smile anew. When the door had closed finally Lillian, standing near the mirror, could but note the difference. She was ghastly in her gay and modish attire, for she had instantly laid aside her mourning for the death of the boy, as an affront to her faith that he still lived. The sharp tooth of suspense had eaten into her capacities of endurance; her hopes preyed upon her in their keen, fictitious exaltations; the alternations of despair brought her to the brink of the grave. She was reduced almost to a shadow; she would go about the affair—she would entertain no other—with a sort of jerking, spasmodic activity as unlike muscular energy as if she were an automaton. She had no rest in her sleep, and would scream and cry out in weird accents at intervals, and dream such dreams! She would blanch when questioned, and close her lips fast, and never a word escaped them of what these visions of terror might be.

XI.

How the mother-heart would have rejoiced could Lillian have divined that her child was well and happy, though affectionate in new ties while she languished in his absence! Archie had begun to adore the old Indian fortune-teller who cuddled and coddled him in loving delight. She lived for a time in grievous fear of his departure, but when no news came of the men who had placed him here, and the date fixed for their return passed without event, she began to gloat on the possibility of desertion. She tried all her ancient savage spells and methods of forecast—many strange jugglings with terrapin-shells and white beads and pointed sticks and the aspect of the decoction of magic herbs. With fervor, she gave herself also to her pagan invocations to those spirits of Zootheism and personified elements of Nature, so real even to the modern Cherokee, esteemed so potent in the ordering of human affairs. Suddenly her hope glowed into triumph! She had a fantastic conviction that the child was bound fast. The signs intimated that the great mystic Red Spider, *Kananiski gigage*, had woven his unseen web about the boy, and he could not escape from those constraining meshes. As to the men—she concluded that they were blown away somewhere. The wind had attended to that little matter. "*Agaluga Hegwa! Atigale yata tsutu negliga,*" she exclaimed in grateful rapture. ("Oh, great Whirlwind! By you they must have been scattered.")

Happiness had long held aloof. She was of the poorest of the tribe; childless, for many years; a widow; she suffered much from rheumatism; she was slowly going blind; she was deemed unlucky and avoided. For more than once of late years she had in important crises predicted disas-

ter, and this prophecy, by fortuitous circumstances, had been fulfilled; thus those to whom a deceitful hope is preferable to a warning of trouble sought by fleeing the oracle to elude the misfortune. Being esteemed a witch, and associated with dark dealings and prone to catastrophe, she lived in peculiar solitude, and the two spent the long months of the winter within the cabin together, while the mountain snows lay heavy on the eaves and the mountain winds beat and giped at the door. Great icicles hung from the dark fissures of the crags; frosty scintillations tipped the fibres of the pines; wolves were a-prowl—sometimes their blood-curdling howls from afar penetrated to the hut where the ill-assorted companions sat together in the red glow of the fire, and roasted their sweet potatoes and apples on the hearth, and cracked nuts to pound into the rich paste affected by the Cherokees, and drank the bland "hominy-water," and gazed happily into each other's eyes, despite their distance apart at the two termini of life, the beginning and the end.

As she could speak no English yet, they must needs find a medium of exchange for their valuable views, so she tried to teach him to speak Cherokee. He was a bird, her little bird, she told him by signs, and his name was *Tsiskwa*. This she repeated again and again in the velvet-soft flutings of her voice. But no! he revolted. His name was Archie Royston, he declaimed proudly. He soon became the monarch of this poor hearth, and he deported himself in royal fashion.

"Oo tan't talk," he said patronizingly to her one day, after listening in futile seriousness to her unintelligible jargon. Forthwith he essayed to teach her to speak English, and, humoring his every freak, she sought to profit. She would fix intent eyes upon him and turn her head askew to listen heedfully while she lisped after his lisping exposition of "Archie Royston." He grew heady with his sense of erudition. He would fairly roll on the puncheon floor in the vainglory of his delight when she identified chair and fire and bed and door by their accurate English names. Sometimes, in a surge of emotion, hardly gratitude or a sense of comfort, neither trust nor hope but the sheer joy of love, the child would come at her in a tumultuous rush, cast himself into her arms, and cover her face with kisses—the face that had at first so terrified him, that was so typical of cruelty and craft and repellent pride. Then as they nestled together they would repeat in concert—poor woman! perhaps she thought it a mystic invocation charged with some potent power of prayer or magic—"Ding-dong, bell!" and the comparative biographies of little Johnny Green and little Johnny Stout, and the vicissitudes of the poor pussy-cat submitted to their diverse ministrations. He was wont to sing for her also, albeit tunelessly, and as he sat blonde and roseate and gay, warbling after his fashion on the hearth, her clouded old eyes were relumed with a radiance that came from within and was independent of the prosaic light of day. His favorite ditty was an old

nursery rhyme in which the name "Pretty Polly Hopkins" occurs with flattering iteration, and he began to apply it to her, for he had come to think her very beautiful—such is the gracious power of love! And while the snow was flying, and the sleet and hail tinkled on the batten shutter, and the draughts bleated and whined in the crevices, he made the rafters ring:

" 'Pretty, pretty Polly Hopkins,
How de do?—how de do?'
" 'None the better, Tommy Tompkins,
For seeing you, for seeing you!'
" 'Polly, I've been to France
And there spent all my cash.'
" 'More the fool for you, Mister Tompkins,
Fool for you, fool for you!'"

It was a valuable course in linguistics for the inmates of the cabin, and Archie Royston was far more intelligible and skilled in expressing himself when that door, that had been closed on the keen blast, was opened to let in the suave spring sunshine and the soft freshness of the mountain air.

XII.

WITH the return of fine weather the work of railroad construction of the extension of the G. T. & C. line began to be pressed forward with eager alacrity. Indeed, it had languished only when the ground was deeply covered with snow or locked so fast in the immobile freeze that steel and iron could not penetrate it. Much of the season, however, had been of the type known as an open winter, and the work had been persistently pushed at practicable intervals, whenever the labor could be constrained to it. Possibly this urgency had no ill-results except in one or two individual cases. The sons of toil are indurated to hardship, and Jubal Clenk, already outworn with age and ill-nourished throughout a meagre life, unaccustomed too to exposure to the elements (for the industry of moonshining is a sheltered and well-warmed business), was the only notable collapse. He began by querulously demanding of any one who would listen to him what he himself could mean by having an "out-dacious pain" under his shoulder-blade. "I feel like I hev been knifed, that's whut!" he would declare. This symptom was presently succeeded by a "misery in his breast-bone," and a racking cough seemed likely to shake to pieces his old skeleton, growing daily more perceptible under his dry, shrivelled skin. A fever shortly set in, but it proved of but scanty interest to the local physician, when called by the boss of the construction gang to look in upon him, in one of the rickety shacks which housed the force of laborers, and which was his temporary home.

"There's no show for him," the doctor laconically remarked. "Lungs, heart, throat, all have got into the game. You had better get rid of him—he will never be of any use again."

"Throw him over the bluff, eh?" the jolly, portly boss demanded with a twinkling eye. "We ain't much on transportation yet."

"Well, it's no great matter. He'll provide his own transportation before long;" and the physician stepped into his buggy with an air of finality.

The old man had, however, unsuspected reserves of vitality. He crept out into the sunshine again, basking in the vernal warmth with a sense of luxury, and entering into the gossip of the ditchers with an unwonted mental activity and garrulity.

One day—one signal day—as he sat clumped up on a pile of timber destined for railroad ties, his arms hugging his knees, his eyes feverishly bright and hollow, a personal interest in his condition was developed in the minds of his old pals and fellow-laborers, Drann and Holvey, albeit of no humane tendency. It was the nooning hour, and the men at their limited leisure lay in the sun on the piles of lumber like lizards.

"Gee!" exclaimed one burly fellow, rising on his elbow. "How I'd like ter git my paw on that reward—five thousand dollars for any information."

"I'm in fur money ez sure ez ye air born! All signs favor," exclaimed old Clenk eagerly. "I dream about money mighty nigh every night. Paid in ter me—chink—chink—I allus takes it in gold. Goin' ter bed is the same ter me that goin' ter the bank is ter most folks."

His interjections into the conversation usually failed to secure even a contemptuous rebuff; they passed as if unheard. But such is the coercive power of gold, albeit in the abstract, that this tenuous vision of wealth had its fascination. The brawny workman held the newspaper aside to look curiously over at the piteous wreck, as the old ragamuffin grinned and giggled in joyous retrospect, then began to read again the advertisement: "Twenty-five thousand dollars in cash if the information leads to the recovery of the child."

"Do they head them advertisements 'Suckers, Attention'?" asked one of the men who labored under the disadvantage of illiteracy. The scraps read aloud from the papers were his only source of information as to their contents. "They oughter say 'Suckers, Attention,' for they don't even tell whut the kid looks like. I would n't know him from Adam ef I wuz ter pass him in the road."

"But they *do* tell what he looks like!" exclaimed the reader. "Here it all is: blue eyes, golden hair, fair skin, rosy cheeks——"

"Cutest leetle trick!" exclaimed old Clenk, with a reminiscent smile at the image thus conjured up.

The words passed unnoticed save by Drann and Holvey. They ex-

changed one glance of consternation, and the fancied security in which they had dwelt, as fragile as a crystal sphere, was shattered in an instant. The old man was broken by his illness, his recent hardships. He was verging on his dotage. His senile folly might well cost them their lives or liberty.

Indeed, as the description progressed, detailing the child's attire even to his red shoes, the old fellow's fingers were toying fatuously with one of them in his deep coat pocket among the loose tobacco that fed his pipe. "That don't half ekeal *him*," he broke out suddenly. "Never war sech another delightsome leetle creeter."

A moment of stunned amazement supervened among the group.

"Why, say, old Noah, did you ever see that kid?" at length demanded the reader, with a keen look of suspicion.

It was the inimical expression perhaps more than a definite consciousness of self-betrayal, that sent the old man's drifting mind to its moorings. "Jes' listenin' ter that beautiful readin'," he grinned, his long, yellow, tobacco-stained teeth all bare in a facial contortion that essayed a smile, his distended lips almost failing of articulation. "Them was fine clothes sure on that dovelly child."

The flamboyant advertisements had often before been read aloud in the construction camp, and the matter might have passed as the half-fevered babblings of a sick old man, but for that look of stultified comment, of anguished foreboding, that was interchanged between the two accomplices. Only one man, however, had the keen observation to catch that fleeting signal, and the enterprise to seek to interpret it.

The next day, when Clenk did not reappear, this man quietly slipped to the shack where the three lived together. There was a padlock knocking in the wind on the flimsy door. This said as plain as speech that there was no one within. Ordinarily this would have precluded all question, all entrance. But the intruder was seeking a pot of gold, and informed by a strong suspicion. With one effort of his brawny hands, he pulled loose from the top first the strap of one of the broad upright boards that formed the walls, then the board itself. He turned sideways and easily slipped his bulk through the aperture, the board swinging elastically back into place.

There was a stove in the squalid little apartment, instead of the open fires common to the region. It was masked in a dusky twilight, but as his eyes became accustomed to the obscurity and the disorder his suspicion exhaled, and a heavy sense of disappointment clogged his activities like a ball and chain.

There in his bunk lay Clenk, his eyes shining with the light of fever, his illness affording an obvious interpretation to the precaution of his comrades in locking the door while they were away to work, at the limits of the construction line, to protect him from molestation by man or beast.

Nevertheless, the intruder made an effort to hold his theory together. He approached the bunk, and with an insidious craft sought to draw the old man out. But Clenk was now on his guard. His comrades had bitterly upbraided him with his self-betrayal, that indeed threatened the safety of all. In fact, their courage was so reduced by the untoward episode that he more than suspected they intended to flee the region, and he was disposed to give the fact that he was left cooped up here under lock and key no such humane interpretation as the intruder had placed upon it. They had left him to starve, if not discovered, while they sought to compass a safe distance. At all events, he was so broken in mind and body that his story was more than likely to be discredited, unless their own clumsy denials and guilty faces were in evidence to confirm its truth.

Now his garrulity had vanished; he licked his thin lips ever and anon, and looked up over the folds of the red blanket drawn to the chin with a bright, inscrutable eye and said nothing. His weakness was so great that the policy of lying silent and supine, rather than exert his failing powers, was commended by his inclination as well as his prudence.

Though it was in vain that the spy plied him with question and suggestion, one phrase was like a galvanic current to this inert atrophy of muscle and mind. "Look here, old man," the intruder said at length, baffled and in despair, "you mark my words!" The brawny form had come close in the shadow and towered over the recumbent and helpless creature, speaking impressively through his set teeth. "You mark my words: your pals are going to do you."

A quiver of patent apprehension ran over the dimly descried face, and under the blanket the limbs writhed feebly; but Clenk's resolution held firm, and with a curse, balked and lowering, the man stepped out at the place where he had effected his entrance at the moment when his scheme might have borne fruit.

For old Clenk had struggled up in bed. This threat was true. He had vaguely suspected the fact, but in the words of another his fear had an added urgency. He had betrayed his accomplices, he had betrayed himself. Doubtless it was a race between them as to who could soonest seize the opportunity to turn State's evidence.

And why should he fear the law more than another? As matters stood, he would be left to bear the brunt of its vengeance, while the active perpetrator of the deed escaped, and the accessories sought shelter beneath the ægis of the law itself.

He was not long in reasoning it out. The strength of his resolution imparted a fictitious vigor to his muscles. While unaided he could never have stirred the heavy board, his efforts made it give, loosened as it had already been, so that his thin, wiry body could slip between its edge and the rest of the wall. He had one moment of intense terror

lest it slip elastically back and hold him pinioned there, but a convulsive struggle sufficed, and he stepped out, exhausted and trembling, into the gathering dusk, a lowering assemblage of darkling mountains, and at a little distance the shacks of the construction gang. The doors were aflame with flickering lights from within, and the unctuous smell of frying pork was on the air. It was well for his enterprise that at the critical moment the camp was discussing its well-earned supper and had scant attention to bestow on other interests.

An hour later the men on a hand-car, whizzing down the portion of the track that was sufficiently complete for this mode of progression, gave little heed that a workman from the camp was stealing a ride, sitting in a huddled clump, his feet dangling. Whether discharged or in the execution of some commission for the construction boss, they did not even canvass. Far too early it was for the question of rates or passes to vex the matter of transportation. They did not even mark when he dropped off, for the hand-car ran into the yards at the terminus, carrying only its own crew.

Clenk was equally fortunate in creeping into an empty freight here unobserved, and when it was uncoupled and the engine swept into the round-house in the city of Glaston, it was verging again toward sunset, and he was hundreds of miles from his starting-point.

Some monitions of craft were vaguely astir in his dull old brain. He had resolved to throw himself on the mercy of the mother, ere he trusted himself to the clutches of the law. He winced from the mere thought of those sharp claws of justice, but he promised himself that he would be swift. He could not say how Holvey and Drann might secure precedence of him. They had gotten the start, and they might hold it. But if he told the child's mother where they had left him, he would surely have a friend at court. When he was in the street he walked without hesitation up to the first responsible-looking man he met, and, showing him the newspaper, boldly asked to be directed to the house of that lady.

So dull he was, so unaccustomed to blocks and turnings and city squares, that after an interval of futile explanation the stranger turned out of his way and walked a few blocks with him. All the world had heard of the tragedy and the mysterious disappearance of the child, and, although suspecting a fake, even a casual stranger would not disregard a chance of aid.

It was well that the distance was not great, for even his excitement was hardly adequate to sustain Clenk's failing physique. When the old mountaineer paused on the concrete sidewalk to which the spacious grounds of the suburban residence sloped, he looked about with disfavor. "Can't see the house fur the trees," he muttered, for the great oaks, accounted so magnificent an appurtenance in Glaston, were to him

the commonest incident of entourage, and a bare door-yard, peeled of grass, a far more significant token of sophistication. As he approached, however, the stately mansion presently appeared, situated on a considerable eminence, and with long flights of stone steps from a portico, enriched with Corinthian columns, and from two successive terraces at some little distance in front. Here were tall stone vases on either hand, and beside one of these at the lower terrace two ladies had paused, waiting, descriing his approach. One was gowned in deep black, sad of aspect, though serene, and very beautiful. The other wore a dress all of sheer white embroideries, with knots of brocaded lilac ribbon, very festival of intimation, but with a face thin, wan, worn, tortured out of all semblance of calm or cheer. He came falteringly toward them, and stood for a moment uncertain. Then—for the scope of his cultivation did not include the civility of lifting his hat—he said, “Which of ye two wimin hev los’ a child?” His voice was quavering, even sympathetic, and very gentle as he looked at them.

“I have lost my little son!” cried Lillian in a keen, strained tone, agonized anew by the mere mention of the catastrophe. “Have you any information about him? I am ready to pay for it.” She had been warned a hundred times that eagerness in proffering money, in making the reward so obviously sure, was not conducive to accelerating the disclosure, bringing into play the natural perversity of human nature, and a desire to trade on the situation and increase the gains; yet try as she might, she could not refrain from invoking always the cogent aid of gold.

“I ain’t so particular ’bout the money, lady. I got su’tthin’ on my mind. I be bent on makin’ it square with the law. An’ then, too, that leetle Archie air a mighty gamesome leetle trick.” He laughed slightly as with a pleasant fleeting reminiscence. “Come mighty nigh dyin’, though—skeered me, fur a fack. Powerful tight squeak he had!”

All at once his eyes passed over her shoulder and lighted on Bayne, who had been walking with the ladies and now stood at the bottom of the flight of the terrace steps. Clenk drew back with an obvious shock. “Why, look-a-hyar, *you* ain’t Mr. Briscoe!” he exclaimed insistently, as with a desire to reassure himself. His eyes large, light, distended, were starting out of his head. His jaw quivered violently. The grimy, claw-like hand he extended shook as with a palsy.

When together, Briscoe and Bayne had scant facial resemblance; but apart, that stamp of consanguinity might easily recall for each the face of the other. Bayne, with his wonted subtlety of divination, replied at once, “No, but Mr. Briscoe was my cousin.”

“Oh, ho—oh, ho—I see,” the old man said, tractable and easily convinced. “I know—Lawd! I got reason ter know that Briscoe’s dead. I war afeared o’ seein’ su’tthin’ oncommon—his harnt, or some sech. The idee shuk me powerful! I hev hed a fever lately. Lemme sit down—

I—I—can't stand up! I been hevin' a misery lately in my breast-bone—oh!"—he waved his hand in the air with a pathetic, grasping gesture—"me breath is gone—me breath, me breath——"

He sank down on an iron bench at one side on the velvety turf and feebly gasped.

"I'll get some brandy," Gladys said in a low tone to Lillian, and sped swiftly up the steps toward the house.

Suddenly Clenk partially lifted himself and dived into one of the pockets of his loose coat. He brought up a little red shoe, all tarnished and tobacco-stained, and held it out to Lillian with a faint and flickering smile of bestowal, certain of recognizance as well as recognition. "Does you-uns know that leetle foot?"

Lillian swayed for a moment as if she might fall. Then, with a piercing shriek, she darted forward and seized it from his shaking grasp. She held it up to the light, and as Gladys returned, herself bearing the tray with the glass and decanter, Lillian convulsively clutched her arm and, speechless and trembling, pointed to the name in tarnished gilt on the inside of the sole—her own shoemaker, who had constructed the delicate little hand-sewed slipper!

"Where is he now—where is this child?" Bayne demanded precipitately, his own breath short, his pulses beating in his temples till the veins seemed near bursting.

"I can't rightly say *now*," the old man drawled; "but—but I kin tell you where we-uns lef' him. 'T war a awful bis'ness, that crackin' off Briscoe—that war n't in the plan at all. We-uns war after the revenuer. What right had he ter bust our still an' break up our wu'm and pour our mash an' singlings out on the ground? Ain't it our'n? Ain't the corn an' apples an' peaches our'n? Did n't we grow 'em?—an' what right hev the gover'ment ter say we kin eat 'em, but can't bile 'em—eh? They b'long ter we-uns—an' gosh, the gover'ment can't hender! But we never meant no harm ter Briscoe. Lawd! Lawd! that war n't in the plan at all. But the child viewed it, an', by gosh, I b'lieve that leetle creetur could hev told the whole tale ez straight as a string—same ez ef he war twenty-five year old. That deedie of a baby-child talked sense—horse-sense—he *did*, fur a fack!"

"Where—where——" Lillian was using every power of her being to restrain the screams of wild excitement, to sustain the suspense.

"Where did you last see him?" asked Bayne. He had grown deadly white, and the old man, lifting his face, gazed vaguely from one to the other. Their intense but controlled excitement seemed subtly imparted to his own nerves. The details of the tragedy had become hackneyed in his own consciousness, but their significance, their surfeit of horror, revived on witnessing their effect on others.

"Look-a-hyar, you two an' this woman will stan' up fur me when I gin myself up fur State's evidence, ef I put ye on the track fur findin' Bubby? He's thar all right yit, I'll be bound—well an' thrivin', I reckon. He hev got backbone, tough ez a pine knot."

"Yes, yes, indeed; we pledge ourselves to sustain you," cried Lillian. Bayne was putting the glass of brandy into the grimy, shaking paw, mindful of the old man's shattered composure.

"It be a mighty risk I be a-runnin'" —the old, seamed face was of a deadly pallor and was beginning to glisten with a cold sweat. "I reckon I ought n't ter tell nuthin' exceptin' ter the officers, but—but—I 'lowed leetle Archie's mother would help me some agin them bloodhounds o' the law."

"I'll move heaven and earth to aid you!" cried Lillian.

"See here, I can *promise* that you shall be held harmless, for I am the prosecutor," Gladys struck suddenly into the conversation, pale but calm, every fibre held to a rigorous self-control. "I am Mr. Briscoe's wife, his widow. Now tell me, *where* did you last see that child?"

"Wh—wh—wh—whut? You the widder?" Clenk's eyes were starting from their sockets as he gazed up at her from his crouching posture on the bench, his head sunk between his shoulders, his hand with the untasted glass in it trembling violently.

"An' ye say that ye too will stand by me? Then lemme tell it—lemme tell it now. 'T wuz—what d' ye call that place?—I ain't familiar with them parts. *Wait*"—as Bayne exclaimed inarticulately—"lemme think a minit." He dropped his head on one of his hands, his arm, supported by the back of the bench, upholding it. His slouched hat had fallen off on the stone pavement, and his shock of gray hair moved in the soft breeze.

The moment's interval in the anguish of suspense seemed interminable to the group. "Drink a little brandy," Bayne counselled, hoping to stimulate his powers.

He evidently heard, and sought to obey. The hand holding the untasted liquor quivered, the glass swayed, fell from his nerveless grasp, and shivered to fragments on the stone.

Bayne sprang to his side and lifted his head. Ah, a drear and ghastly face it was, turned up to the gorgeous sunset, the gentle ambient air, the happy, fleeting shadows of the homing birds.

"Has he fainted?" asked Lillian.

"The man is dead!" Bayne cried with a poignant intonation. "He is dead! He is dead!"

For while they had waited for the word that had eluded him he had gone out into the great wordless unknown. His failing strength had thwarted his will. His spirit had given him the slip.

XIII.

EVERY appliance of resuscitation known to science was brought into use, but in vain. No scrap of paper, no clue of identification, was found upon the body. The three, bound together in such close ties of sympathy, were stricken as with a new and appalling affliction. The burden was all the heavier for that momentary lightening of a treacherous hope. For a time Bayne could not reconcile himself to this new disaster. So overwhelming indeed, so obvious, was its effect that Lillian, ever with her covetous appropriation of every faculty, her grasping claim on every identity in this sacred cause, feared that despair had at last overtaken him, and that he would succumb and give over definitely the search. The idea roused her to a sort of galvanic energy in promoting the project, and she would continually formulate fantastic plans and suggest to him tenuous theories with feverish volubility, only to have him thrust them aside with a lack-lustre indifference that their futility merited.

"He is discouraged, Gladys; he is at the end of his resources," she said aside to her friend. "He can try no more."

"How can *you* believe that?" cried Gladys.

Even in this crisis Lillian noted anew with a wounded amazement the significant smile on the fair face of her friend, the proud pose of her head. Could she arrogate such triumphant confidence in the temper and nature of a man who did not love her?—whose heart and mind were not trusted to her keeping? That doubt assailed Lillian anew in Bayne's absence, and in the scope for dreary meditation that the eventless days afforded it developed a fang that added its cruelties to a grief which she had imagined could be supplemented by no other sorrow.

It was merely sympathy that animated him in her behalf, she felt sure; it was pity for her helplessness when none other would abet the hopeless effort to recover the child. His conviction that the child still lived constrained him by the dictates of humanity to seek his rescue. He was doubtless moved, too, by the great generosity of his heart, his magnanimity; but not by love—never by love! How could it be, indeed, in the face of all that had come and gone, and of the constant contrast, mind, body, and soul, with the perfect, the peerless Gladys!

In this, the dreariest of his absences, seldom a word came to the two women waiting alternately in agonized expectation or dull despair. For Bayne was much of the time beyond the reach of postal and telegraphic facilities. In the endeavor to discover some clue to identify that strange visitant of the smiling spring sunset, and thus reach other participants in the crime of the murder and the abduction, Bayne had the body conveyed to the Great Smoky Range, within the vicinity of the Briscoe bungalow, discerning from the speech of the man, as well as from his familiarity with the deed, that he was a native mountaineer. Lillian had desired to bestow upon him, in return for his intention of aid at

the last, a decent burial, but the interpretation of the metropolitan undertaker of this commission was so far in excess of the habit of the rustic region that men who had known old Clenk all their lives did not recognize him as he lay in his coffin, clean, bathed, shaven, clad in a suit of respectable black and with all the dignity of immaculate linen, and they swore that they had never before seen him. The alertness of Copenny's guilty conscience sharpened his faculties. His keen eyes penetrated the disguise of this reputable aspect at once, though he sedulously kept his own counsel. He heard the details of the death in the rounds of the mountain gossip, and divined what Clenk's errand had been. He deemed that the effort to turn State's evidence had met its condign punishment, and he felt more assured and secure now that it had been attempted and had failed.

Bayne, however, had scant time to push his investigations here, where indeed the ground had been previously so thoroughly searched, for he was summoned away by another lure of a clue far to the northeast. His recent bitter disappointment, on the verge of a discovery of importance, perhaps enabled him better to bear in this instance the result of a fruitless quest, for he had definitely ceased to hope. He had begun to fear that the child was dead. Clenk's words implied no present knowledge of his seclusion. The allusion to a severe illness suggested possibilities of relapse, of a weakening of his constitution as much from lack of proper attention and nourishment as from disease.

On the lonely railway journey from the scene of this latest disappointment, Bayne was dismayed to note from time to time how blank were the hours before him, how his invention had flagged! What to do next, what tortuous path to try, he did not know. Now and again he sought to spur up his jaded faculties to perceive in the intricate circumstances of all his futile plans some fibre of a thread, untried hitherto, that might serve to unravel all this web of mystery. But no! He seemed at the end. His mind was dull, stagnant; his thoughts were heavy; he was oblivious of the surroundings. The incidents of the passing moment scarcely impinged upon his consciousness. He did not share the vexation of his fellow-passengers when a wreck of freightage on the track bade fair to delay the train some hours, awaiting the clearance of the obstructions. It hardly mattered where he spent the time. He had lost all interests, all hold on other phases of life, and this that he had made paramount, essential, baffled and deluded and denied him, and in its elusiveness it seemed now to have worn him quite out.

Then once more he sought to goad his drooping spirits, to rouse himself to a keener efficiency. He would not give up the emprise, he declared again, he would not be conquered save by time itself. It was rather an instinct, in pursuance of this revival of his resolution, to seek to rid himself of his own thoughts, the constant canvass of his despair;

this had necessarily a resilient effect, benumbing to the possibilities of new inspiration. He sought to freshen his faculties, to find some diversion in the passing moment that might react favorably on the plan nearest his heart. He forced himself to listen, at first in dull preoccupation, to the talk of a group in the smoker; it glanced from one subject to another—the surroundings, the soil, the timber, the mining interests—and presently concentrated on a quaint corner of the region, near the scene of the stoppage, the Qualla Boundary. This was the reservation of a portion of the tribe of Cherokee Indians, the Eastern Band, who nearly a century earlier had evaded, in the dense fastnesses of these mountains, removal with their brethren to the west, and had finally succeeded in buying from the government this mountainous tract of fifty thousand acres.

As Bayne looked out of the window, urging his mind to appraise the human interest of the entourage, to apprehend its significance, he bethought himself of a certain old Cherokee phrase that used to baffle him in his philologic studies. He remembered in a sort of dreary wonder that he had once felt enough curiosity concerning this ancient locution to maintain a correspondence with the Ethnologic Bureau of the Smithsonian Institution as to its precise signification—and now he could scarcely make shift to recollect it.

He had then been hard on the track of the vanishing past; his wish was to verify, solely for the sake of scholastic accuracy, these words of the ancient Cherokee tongue, the Ayrate dialect, which was formerly the language of their lowland settlements in this region, but which, since the exodus of the majority of these Indians to the west and the fusion of the lingering remnant of their upper and lower towns into this tribal reservation east of the Great Smoky Mountains, has become lost, merged with the Ottare (Atali) dialect, once distinctively the speech of their highland villages only, but now practically modern Cherokee.

As Bayne recalled the circumstances, he noted one of the Qualla Indians loitering about the scene of the wreck. He put a question to him from out the window of the Pullman Coach, and discovered that he spoke English with some facility. The old habit reasserted itself with inherent energy, and presently Bayne was moved to leave the car and sit on a pile of wood near the track, where, with his new acquaintance, he floundered over verbal perversions of modern changes, and lost significations, of the language, and the contortions of Anglicized idioms, till at length he remarked that if his interlocutor would act as interpreter he would like to converse on the subject of these words with some old Cherokee who had never learned English and had seldom heard it spoken.

The Qualla Boundary is sufficiently permeated with the spirit of the past to feel that Time is the intimate possession of man. In that languid environment there is no frenzy to utilize it lest it fly away. No

man is hurried into his grave within the reservation. It seemed not more strange to the Indian than to the linguist to spend an hour or so in meditating on a queer word that has lost its meaning amidst the surges of change. The tribesman, lending himself readily to the investigation, suddenly bethought himself of the ancient sibyl in her remote cabin on the steep slant of the mountain, among the oldest and the least progressive denizens of the Qualla Boundary.

Despite her arrogations of uncanny foreknowledge of human events, despite her mystic lore of spells and charms, she had no faint presentiment of the fact when Fate came boldly here and laid a hand on her door. None of her familiars of the air, of the earth, gave her warning. Often she thought of this afterward with bitterness, with upbraiding. The Mountain Climber, *Atali Kuli* (the ginseng), must, she was sure, have known of this inimical ascent of the steeps, but he only burrowed the deeper, and treacherously made no sign. As to *Agaluga Hegwa*, the great Whirlwind—she would have bidden him arise quickly—“*Hausinuli datule-hu gu!*”—but to what avail! Doubtless he was asleep somewhere on the sunny slopes. The Ancient White Fire was covered with ash; not a glimmer did *Higayuli Tsunega* afford her, not a flicker. What a mockery was it that *Kananiski Gigage* should pretend to weave his web so fast, so fine, about the child, and yet suffer its strong meshes to be burst apart by a mere word.

It was not the obsolete word which the visitor sought, for as he sat outside her door in a chair, brought from within the cabin, while she crouched on the threshold, and the interpreter perched on the stump of a tree, an interruption occurred that flung those enigmatic syllables back on the mysterious past forever. “Polly Hopkins” in her poor and ragged calico gown—for the picturesque Indian garb of yore is now but a tradition in the Qualla Boundary—had barely lifted her head in her flapping old sunbonnet, that scarcely disguised its pose of surprised expectation, when a sound came from the interior of the house as turbulent as the approach of a troop of wild horses, and instantly there rushed out into the sunshine a sturdy blonde child about three years of age, with wide, daring blue eyes, golden hair, long, muscular bare legs, arrayed in a queer little frock of blue gingham, and no further garb than the graces of his own symmetry.

For a moment Bayne was like a man in a dream. To be confronted suddenly with the realization of all his hopes, the consummation of all his struggles, took his breath away. He had not been sufficiently acquainted with the boy to recognize him at once in this different attire, and with the growth and vigor of nearly a year's time, but the incongruity of his fair complexion, his blonde hair, in this entourage, his exotic aspect, made Bayne's heart leap and every nerve tremble.

Meeting the gaze of the big, unafraid blue eyes, he asked at a venture in English, "And what is your name, young man?"

"Archie Royston," promptly replied the assured and lordly youngster.

"Alchie Loyston," mechanically repeated the old sibyl. Even the glance of her dimmed eyes was a caress as she fondly turned them toward the child.

Bayne looked as if he might faint. A sharp exclamation was scarcely arrested on his lips. He flushed deeply, then turned pale with excitement. For months past, flaring in all the public prints, that name had been advertised with every entreaty that humanity must regard, with every lure that might excite cupidity, with every threat that intimidation could compass. And here, in this sequestered spot, out of the world, as it were, among the remnant of an Indian tribe, of a peculiarly secluded life, indifferent to civilization, of a strange archaic speech and an isolated interest, was craftily hidden the long-lost child. Any ill-considered remark might even yet jeopard his restoration, might result in his withdrawal, sequestered anew and inaccessible. Julian Bayne became poignantly mindful of precaution. He affected to write down the Cherokee words as the interpreter and the old sibyl discussed them, but his pencil trembled so that he could hardly fashion a letter. It was an interval to him of urgent inward debate. He scarcely dared to lose sight of the boy for one moment, yet he more than feared the slightest demonstration unsupported.

He was in terror lest he find the situation changed when next he approached the fortune-teller's cabin, a few hours later, but the little blonde boy, half nude, was playing in the lush grass before the open door. The visitor was bolder now, being accompanied by an officer of the law; so bold indeed that he was able to pity the grief of the poor, unintelligible squaw, volleying forth a world of words of which every tenth phrase was "Alchie Loyston." By what argument she sought to detain him, what claims she preferred, what threats she voiced, can never be known. The sheriff of the county was obdurate, deaf to all intents and purposes. He shook his head glumly when it was suggested that she might remain with the child until his mother should arrive in response to the telegram already sent. "Might poison him—Indians are queer cattle! Mocking-birds will do that if the young ones are caged—through the bars—by jing!"

All night long, like some faithful dog, she lay on the floor outside the door of the room where they kept the child, her face to the threshold; and on the inner side, in emulation and imitation, little Archie lay on the floor and echoed her every groan and responded to her lightest whisper. But sleep was good to him, and when he was quite unconscious the officers took him up and placed him on a bed, while they awaited in great excitement and with what patience they could muster the

response to the telegram sent by Bayne, couched in guarded phrase and held well within the facts:

Child here in the Qualla Boundary, answering to description in advertisements. Says his name is Archie Royston. Will not talk further. Well-treated. Held for identification. Awaiting advices.

XIV.

LILLIAN, at her home in Glaston, replied by wire in that tumult of emotion which each new lure was potent to excite, despite the quicksands of baseless hope that had whelmed its many precursors. Still, she expected only another instance of deliberate and brazen fraud, or crafty and sleek imposture, or, worse still, a case of honest mistake. The little suit-case, packed with all that the child might need, that had journeyed through so many vicissitudes, so many thousand miles, was once more in her hand as she took the train. She never forgot that long night of travel, more poignant than all her anguished journeyings that had preceded it. Hurtling through the air, it seemed, with a sense of fierce speed; the varied clangors of the train, the ringing of the rails, the frequent hoarse blasts of the whistle, the jangling of the metallic fixtures, the jarring of the window-panes, all were keenly differentiated by her exacerbated and sensitive perceptions, and each had its own peculiar irritation. She scarcely hoped that she might sleep, and it was only with a dutiful sense of conserving her strength and exerting the utmost power of her will in the endeavor, that she lay down when her berth was prepared. But the seclusion, the darkness within the curtains, oppressed her, for unwittingly the sights and sounds of the outer world had an influence to make her quit of herself, in a measure, and to focus her mind on some trivial object of the immediate present. She drew the blind at the window that she might see the scurrying landscape—the fields, the woods, the river—and now and again the sparkling lights of a city, looking in the distance as if some constellation, richly instarred with golden glammers, had fallen and lay amidst the purple glooms of the hills. For these elevations, and the frequent tunnels as the dawn drew near, gave token that the mountains were not distant; the great central basin of Tennessee lay far to the west; the engine was often climbing a steep grade, as she noted from the sound. She was going to the mountains, to the mountains—to meet what? Sometimes she clasped her hands and prayed aloud in her fear, and heart-ache, and woe. Then she blessed the many clamors of the train that had lacerated her tenderest fibres, for they deadened the sound of her piteous complaints, and she was a proud woman and would fain that none heard these heart-throbs of anguish but the pitying God Himself.

She must have slept from time to time, she thought, for she was refreshed and calmer when she looked forth from the window and beheld

the resplendent glories of the sunrise amidst the Great Smoky Mountains. Vast, far-stretching, lofty, as impressive as the idea of eternity, as awesome as the menace of doom, as silent as the unimagined purposes of creation, they lifted their august summits. They showed a deep, restful verdure in the foreground, and in more distant reaches assumed the blandest enrichments of blue, fading and fading to mere illusions of ranges, and finally dreaming away to the misty mirages of the horizon.

Lillian was ready, erect, tense, waiting, for miles and miles before her destination could be reached, when suddenly the conductor appeared, his face alive with the realization of sensation. The sheriff of the county had flagged the train. He had a vehicle in waiting for Mrs. Royston, in order that she might curtail the distance, as the house where the child was held was on the verge of the Qualla Boundary, and the nearest station was still some miles further. There were few words spoken on that hasty morning drive under the vast growths of the dense and gigantic valley woods. The freshness of the forest air, the redundant bloom of the rhododendron, the glimpse now and again of a scene of unparalleled splendor of mountain range, and the graces of the Oconalufy River, swirling and dandering through the sunshine as if its chant in praise of June must have a meaning translated to the dullest ear—all was for Lillian as if it had not been. The officers had cast but one glance at her tense, pale face, then turned their eyes away. The suspense, the pain, the torture of fear could end only with that signal moment of identification. Though the group respected her sorrow in silence, they themselves experienced the rigors of uncertainty and agitation when the log cabin came into view amidst the laurel, and every man of them trooped in, following her, when the door opened and she was ushered into the little, low-ceiled room, so mean, so rough, so dingy of hue. But for her it held the wealth of the universe, the joy of all the ages. There upon the bed lay her sleeping child, larger, more vigorous, than she remembered him, garbed in a quaint little garment of blue gingham; his blonde hair clipped close, save for two fine curls on top, worn indeed like a scalp-lock; his long lashes on his cheeks, rosy ripe; his red lips slightly parted; his fine, firm-fleshed white arms tossed above his head; his long, bare legs and plump, dimpled feet stretched out at their full length. His lips moved with an unformulated murmur as her hysterical, quavering scream of joyful recognition rang through the room. Then he opened his big blue eyes to find his mother bending over him. He did not recognize her at once, and after a peevish sleepy stare he pushed her aside, calling plaintively for his precious "Polly Hopkins."

"Oh, bring Polly Hopkins, whoever she is!" cried the poor rebuffed mother. "And Heaven bless her if she has been good to him."

But when the dismal old squaw blundered into the room, more blinded by grief and tears than infirmity, the identity of his visitor came

back suddenly to him with the recollections of the past, and in all the transcendent joy of an invaluable possession he called out, "Look, Mamma! Ain't her pretty? So-o pretty! Me s-sweet Polly Hopkins!" And, sitting up in bed, he threw his arms around both as they knelt beside it, and all three wept locked in the same tender embrace.

For Lillian would not hear of the implication of "Polly Hopkins" in the suspicion of the abduction, and the rigors of the law were annulled so far as she was concerned. On the contrary, Mrs. Royston's first effort was to ameliorate the old woman's condition, to take her at once to their home to be cherished there forever. When the ancient sibyl, affrighted at the idea of removal and change, positively refused, the mother tenderly begged that she would tell then what could be done for her.

"Polly Hopkins" asked but one boon: the boy. That was the limit of her demand.

Lillian was fain to solace her earnest desire to bestow rich reward by settling a comfortable annuity on her and contracting for a snug, stanch house to be built here, with every appliance that could add to her comfort, and for this "Polly Hopkins" cared not at all; for her poor home had been full of joy with "Alchie Loyston."

"I am glad I can afford it," said Lillian, with a gush of tears—how long it had been since she could say she was glad of aught! "Though she will not come with me, I shall have the best specialist in the United States to leave everything and come here and take the cataracts from her eyes. At least, she shall have her sight restored."

But alack, it was not "Alchie Loyston" whom she should see!

As for Lillian, she would scarcely consent to be separated from the child for one moment. The authorities conceived it necessary to take his statement in private—but allowed her to stand just outside the door—before his mind could be influenced by the comments of others or the involuntary assimilation of their views with his knowledge of the facts, for there was still a large reward for any information leading to the apprehension of the murderers of Edward Briscoe. Little Archie had obviously been a witness of that catastrophe and kidnapped to prevent his revealing the identity of its perpetrators. Indeed, this was a well-founded fear, for he was very glib with the details of that momentous occasion, and he had no sooner mentioned the name of Phineas Copenny, or "Phinny 'Penny," in his infantile perversion, than the North Carolina official turned aside and indited a telegram to the sheriff of the county in Tennessee where the crime had been committed.

None of his capacity to make himself understood had the boy lost by the craft of the moonshiners in placing him where he would never hear an English word and was likely to forget the language. A very coherent story he told still later when he was brought into the criminal

court at Shaftesville, being the capital of the county in Tennessee where the deed was perpetrated, and confronted with Copenny. One of the moonshiners, arrested on suspicion of complicity with the murder, had turned State's evidence and had given testimony as to the details of the plot to ambush the revenue officer, and the delegation of Phineas Copenny and two others to execute it. Another testified that he had afterward heard of the murderous plan and of the mistake in the identity of the victim; but as neither of these parties was present at the catastrophe, the story of the child was relied on as an eye-witness to corroborate this proof. The admission of his testimony was hotly contested because of his tender years, despite the wide inclusiveness of the statute, and its inadequacy would possibly have resulted in a reversal of the case had an appeal been taken. But Phineas Copenny made no motion for a new trial and desired no appeal. He had feared, throughout, the possible capture and conclusive testimony of Clenk and Holvey, and, lest a worse thing befall him, he accepted a sentence of a long term in the penitentiary. In view of the turpitude of "lying in wait," though a matter of inference and not proof, he doubted the saving grace of that anomaly of the Tennessee law that in order to constitute murder in the first degree the victim of a premeditated slaughter must be the person intended to be slain.

There was scant doubt as to his guilt in the minds of the jury. The boy singled out Copenny from a crowd in which he had been placed to test his recognition by the little witness. He remembered the man's name, and called him by it. He gave an excited account of the shooting, although this was the least intelligible part of his testimony, for he often interrupted himself to exclaim, "Pop-gun—*bang!*" disconnectedly, as the scene renewed itself in his memory. He explained the disappearance of Mr. Briscoe and the mare by the statement that "Phinny runned out—pop-gun—*bang!*—an' bofe felled over the bluff." He called the moonshiners' cave a cellar, however, and declared that he went hunting for his mamma in a boat, and the counsel for the defense made the most of such puerilities and contradictions. But the child was very explicit concerning the riving from him of his coat by Phineas Copenny, and the plan to throw it over the bluff, and it made a distinct impression on the jury when he added that Copenny took his hat also—for no mention had been made of the discovery of the hat in the quicksand in the valley—and that Copenny had broken the elastic that held it under his chin and this snapped his cheek. He could, nevertheless, give no account how he reached the Qualla Boundary, and he broke off suddenly, dimpling, bright-eyed, and roseate, to ask the judge if he knew "Polly Hopkins."

"Her is so-o pretty!" he cried out in tender regret.

Mrs. Royston was nettled by the laughter elicited by this query, with

its obvious fervor of enthusiasm, for she divined that the merriment of the crowd was charged with ridicule of the incongruous object of his callow adoration, the forlorn old fortune-teller, who had been so gentle and so generous, albeit so alien to the civilization of the present day. Lillian could but realize that the ministering angel is of no time or nationality, and the transcendent beauty of its apparition may well be a matter of spiritual and not merely visual perception. The heart of a woman is no undecipherable palimpsest, for the successive register of fleeting impressions. Here was written in indelible script the tenderest thought of affection, the kindest charity, and all the soft graces of fostering sentiment, with no compensatory values of reciprocal loyalty, or the imposing characters of authority. For the old squaw could not even understand the justice of the dispensation; it seemed to her that with impunity she was deserted, denied; her plea was a jest to right reason; her love, in which the child had once rejoiced, was superfluous, worthless, now that he had come to his own; her poor hearth, which his bright infantile smiles had richly illumined, was dark, desolate; the inexorable logic of law and worldly advantages was beyond her ken, and she felt that she had only rescued and cherished the little waif that she herself might be lacerated by grief and bereaved for his sake, and fain to beat her breast and to heap ashes on her head. Poor, poor, "pretty Polly Hopkins"!

Cheering news of her, however, now and again came from the mountains. The noted oculist, after his final visit to her, stopped over in Glaston to report to Mrs. Royston the complete success of the treatment, knowing the gratification the details would afford her. He brought, too, the intelligence that she was free of her old torture from rheumatism, which had been of the muscular sort, resulting from exposure and deprivation, and had yielded to the comforts of the trig, close house which Mrs. Royston had built for her, and the abundance of warm furnishings and nutritious food, a degree of luxury indeed which was hardly known elsewhere in the Boundary. Her prosperity had evolved the equivocal advantage of restoring her prestige as a sibyl, and she had entered upon a new lease of the practice of the dark arts of fortune-telling and working charms and spells. He gave a humorous account of her expressions of gratitude to him for the restoration of her sight, which Bayne, who chanced to be present, perceived did not add to Mrs. Royston's pleasure; for she regarded "Polly Hopkins" very seriously indeed. Before the physician quitted the "Boundary," the old squaw bestowed upon him, through the interpreter, certain secret magic formulæ for working enchantments on his city patients, and thereby effecting rapid cures and filling his coffers. Knowing of Bayne's interest in linguistics, the oculist jocularly turned these archaic curios over to him. In that connection Bayne recounted that after the child had departed

with his mother from the mountains, he himself being detained by final arrangements with the authorities, his interest in researches into the arcana of old Cherokee customs had been promoted by seeing the sibyl seated on the ground, swaying and wailing and moaning, and casting ashes on her head as if making her mourning for the dead. At the time he had marked the parity of the observance with the Hebraic usage, and he intended to make an examination into the origin of the curious tradition of the identity of the American Indians with the lost tribes of Israel.

Train-time forced the oculist to a hasty leave-taking, and it was only after he was gone that Bayne noticed the evidence of restrained emotion in Lillian's face. Bayne had been about to conclude his own call, which concerned a matter of business, the claim of a reward which he considered fraudulent, but he turned at the door, his hat in his hand and came back, leaning against the mantel-piece opposite her. He noted that the tears stood deep in her eyes.

"I can't bear to think of her unhappiness," she said, "when I consider all I owe to her."

"You had better consider what you owe to me," Bayne gayly retorted, seeking to effect a diversion.

"Oh, you, you! But for *you*! When I think of what you have done for Archie, and for me, I could fall down at your feet and worship you!" she exclaimed with tearful fervor.

"Oh, oh, this is so sudden!" he cried, with a touch of his old whimsicality.

"Don't—don't make fun of me!" she expostulated.

"Bless you, I am serious indeed! I expected something like this, but not so soon; and, in fact, I expected to say it *myself*—but I could not have done it better!"

"Did you really intend to say it, to come back to me?" She gazed appealingly at him.

"As soon as we had time for such trifles." He would not enter into her saddened mood.

"But one thing I want to know: did you *really* intend it, or was it only my cruel affliction that brought you back to me—motives of sheer humanity—because no one else would help me, because they thought I was the prey of frenzied fancies to believe that Archie still lived?"

Julian was silent for a moment, obviously hesitating. Then he reluctantly admitted, "No, I should never have come back."

She threw herself back in the chair with a little pathetic sigh. He looked at her with a smile at once tender and whimsical. She too smiled faintly, then took up the theme anew.

"But, Julian," she persisted, "it is very painful to reflect that you

had deliberately shut me out of your heart forever; that when you saw me again you had no impulse to renew the past. Had you none, really?"

The temptation was strong to give her the reassurance she craved. She had suffered so bitterly that a pang of merely sentimental woe seemed a gratuitous cruelty. Yet he was resolved that there should never come the shadow of falsehood between them. He was glad—joyous! The future should make brave amends for the past. He sought to cast off the bitter retrospection with which she had invested the situation. His gay laughter rang out. "Madam, I will not deceive you! I intended that you should *never* get another shot at me; but circumstances have been too much for me—and I have ceased to struggle against them."



BETHLEHEM

BY CLINTON SCOLLARD

BETHLEHEM, Bethlehem,
 Shimmering afar,
 Underneath the sunlight,
 Underneath the star,
 You are like a precious gem
 (Gold and ivory),
 Set upon the morning hills
 For the world to see!

Bethlehem, Bethlehem,
 With your domes and towers,
 Do you ever brood and dream
 Through the fleeting hours
 That you have for diadem
 What none other knows,
 Set upon the morning hills,
 White Judean rose?

Bethlehem, Bethlehem,
 Consecrate afar,
 Glad beneath the sunlight,
 Blest beneath the star,
 You have Him for anadem,
 Him to whom men pray,
 Born upon the morning hills
 That first Christmas day!

"THE SUNRISE POET"

By La Salle Corbell Pickett

Author of "Pickett and His Men," "Tinny," etc.

IN my memory-gallery hangs a beautiful picture of the Lanier home as I saw it years ago, on High Street in Macon, Georgia, upon a hillock with greensward sloping down on all sides. It is a wide, roomy mansion, with hospitality written all over its broad steps that lead up to a wide veranda on which many windows look out and smile upon the visitor as he enters. One tall dormer window, overarched with a high peak, comes out to the very edge of the roof to welcome the guest. Two, smaller and more retiring, stand upon the verge of the high-combed house-roof and look down in friendly greeting. There are tall trees in the yard, bending a little to touch the old house lovingly.

Far away stretched the old oaks that girdled Macon with greenery, where Sidney Lanier and his brother Clifford used to spend their school-boy Saturdays among the birds and rabbits. Near by flows the Ocmulgee, where the boys, inseparable in sport as well as in the more serious aspects of life, were wont to fish. Here Sidney cut the reed with which he took his first flute lesson from the birds in the woods. Above the town were the hills for which the soul of the poet longed in after life.

Macon was the "live" city of middle Georgia. She made no effort to rival Richmond or Charleston as an educational or literary centre, but she had an admirable commercial standing, and offered a generous hospitality that kept her in fond remembrance. In the Macon post-office Sidney Lanier had his first business experience, to offset the drowsy influence of sleepy Midway, the seat of Oglethorpe College, where he continued his studies after completing the course laid out in the "'Cademy" under the oaks and hickories of Macon.

January 6, 1857, Lanier entered the sophomore class of Oglethorpe, where it was unlawful to purvey any commodity, except Calvinism, "within a mile and a half of the University"—a sad regulation for college boys, who, as a rule, have several tastes unconnected with religious orthodoxy.

Lanier carried with him the "small, yellow, one-keyed flute" which

had superseded the musical reed provided by Nature, and practised upon it so fervently that a college-mate said that he "would play upon his flute like one inspired."

Montvale Springs, in the mountains of Tennessee, where Sidney's grandfather, Sterling Lanier, built a hotel in which he gave his twenty-five grandchildren a vacation one summer, still holds the memory of that wondrous flute and yet more marvellous nature among the "strong, sweet trees, like brawny men with virgins' hearts." From its ferns and mosses and "reckless vines" and priestly oaks lifting yearning arms toward the stars, Lanier returned to Oglethorpe as a tutor. Here amid hard work and haunting suggestions of a coming poem, "The Jacquerie," he tried to work out the problem of his life's expression.



When the guns of Fort Sumter thundered across Sidney Lanier's dreams of music and poetry, he joined the Macon volunteers, the first company to march from Georgia into Virginia. It was stationed near Norfolk, camping in the fair-grounds in the time that Lanier describes as "the gay days of mandolin and guitar and moonlight sails on the James River." Life there seems not to have been "all beer and skittles," or the poetic substitutes therefor, for he goes on to say that their principal duties were to picket the beach, their "pleasures and sweet rewards of toil consisting in ague which played dice with our bones, and blue mass pills that played the deuce with our livers."

In 1862, the Company went to Wilmington, North Carolina, where they indulged "for two or three months in what are called the 'dry shakes of the sand-hills,' a sort of brilliant tremolo movement." The time not required for the "tremolo movement" was spent in building Fort Fisher, until they were ordered to Drewry's Bluff, and then to the Chickahominy, where they took part in the Seven Days' fight.

Even war places were literary shrines for Lanier, for wherever he chanced to be he was constantly dedicating himself anew to the work of his life. In Petersburg he studied in the Public Library. In that old town he first saw General R. E. Lee, and watched his calm face until he "felt that the antique earth returned out of the past and some mystic god sat on a hill, sculptured in stone, presiding over a terrible, yet sublime, contest of human passions"—perhaps the most poetic conception ever awakened by the somewhat familiar view of an elderly gentleman asleep under the influence of a sermon on a drowsy mid-summer day. Writing to his father from Fort Boykin, he asks him to "seize at any price volumes of Uhland, Lessing, Schelling, Tieck."

In the spring of 1863, on a visit to his old home in Macon, Lanier met Miss Mary Day and promptly fell in love, a fortunate occurrence

for him, in that he secured an inspiring companion in his short and brilliant life, and for us because it is to her loving care that we owe the preservation of much of his finest work. On the return to Virginia, he and his brother Clifford had as companions the charming Mrs. Clement C. Clay and her sister, who wanted escorts from Macon to Virginia. She claims to have bribed them with "broiled partridges, sho' 'nuf sugar, and sho' 'nuf butter and spring chickens, 'quality size,' " to which allurements the youthful poets are alleged to have succumbed with grace and gallantry. I recall an evening that General Pickett and I spent with Mrs. Clay at the Spotswood Hotel, when she told us of her trip from Macon, and her two poet escorts. I remember that Senator Vest was present and played the violin while Senator and Mrs. Clay danced.



Sidney Lanier said of his experience at Fort Boykin, on Burwell's Bay, that it was in many respects "the most delicious period" of his life. It may be that no other young soldier found so much of romance and poetry in the service of Mars or put so much of it into the lives of those around him. There are old men, now, who in their youth lived on the James River, in whose hearts the melody of Sidney Lanier's flute yet lingers in golden fire and dewy flowering. At Fort Boykin he decided the question of his vocation, writing to his father so eloquent a letter upon the desirability of pursuing his tastes, rather than trying to follow the paternal footsteps in a profession for which he had no talent, that his father relinquished all hope of making a lawyer of his gifted son.

In Wilmington, North Carolina, Lanier served as signal officer until he was captured and taken to the prison camp at Point Lookout, in which gloomy place was developed the disease which in a few years deprived literature and music of a light that would have sparkled in beauty through the mists of centuries. Imprisonment did not serve as an interruption to the work of the student, for even a prison cell was a shrine to the radiant gods of Lanier's vision. Probably Heine and Herder were never before translated in surroundings so little congenial to those masters of poesy. One of his fellow prisoners said that Lanier's flute "was an angel imprisoned with us to cheer and console us." To the few who are left to remember him at that time, the waves of the Chesapeake, with the sandy beach sweeping down to kiss the waters and the far-off dusky pines, are still melodious with that music.

After his release he was taken to the Macon home, where he was dangerously ill for two months, being there when General Wilson captured the town and Mr. Jefferson Davis and Senator Clement C. Clay were brought to the Lanier house on their gloomy journey to Fortress Monroe. In that month Lanier's mother died of consumption, and he

spent the summer months at home with his father and sister. In the autumn he taught on a large plantation nine miles from Macon, where, with "mind fairly teeming with beautiful things," he was shut up in the "tare and tret" of the school-room. He spent the winter at Point Clear on Mobile Bay, breathing in health with the sea-breezes and the air that drifted fragrantly through the pines.

As clerk in the Exchange Hotel in Montgomery, the property of his grandfather and his uncles, he may have found no more advantageous a field for his "beautiful things" than in the Georgia school-room, but even in that "dreamy and drowsy and drone-y town" there was some life "late in the afternoon, when the girls come out one by one and shine and move, just as the stars do an hour later." But Lanier was as patient and self-contained in peace as he had been brave in war, and he accepted the drowsy life of Montgomery as he had accepted the romance and adventures of Fort Boykin, on Sundays playing the pipe-organ in the Presbyterian Church, and spending his leisure in finishing "Tiger Lilies," begun in the wild days of '63, on Burwell's Bay. In 1867 he returned to Macon, where in September he read the proof of his book, his one effort at romance-writing, chiefly noticeable for its musical element. The fluting of the author is recalled by the description of the hero's flute-playing: "It is like walking in the woods among wild flowers just before you go into some vast cathedral."



The next winter Sidney Lanier was teaching in Prattville, Alabama, a town built on a quagmire by Daniel Pratt, of whom one of his negroes said his "Massa seemed dissatisfied with the way God had made the earth and he was always digging down the hills and filling up the hollows." Prattville was a small manufacturing town, and Lanier was about as appropriately placed there as Arion would have been in a tin-shop, but he kept his humorous outlook on life, departing from his serenity so far as to make his only attempts at expressing in verse his political indignation, the results of which he did not regard as poetry, and they do not appear in the collection of his poems. His muse was better adapted to the harmonies than to the discords of life. Some lines written then furnish a graphic picture of conditions in the South at that time:

Young Trade is dead,
And swart Work sullen sits in the hillside fern
And folds his arms that find no bread to earn,
And bows his head.

In 1868, after Lanier's marriage, he took up the practice of law in

his father's office in Macon. In that town he made his eloquent Confederate Memorial address, April 26, 1870.

Lanier, to whom "Home" meant all that was radiant and joyous in life, wrote to Paul Hamilton Hayne that he was "homeless as the ghost of Judas Iscariot." He was thrust upon a wandering existence by the always unsuccessful attempt to find strength enough to do his work. At Brunswick he found the scene of his Marsh poems in "the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn," in which he reaches his depth of poetic feeling and his height of poetic expression.

From Lookout Mountain he wrote Hayne that at about midnight he had received his letter and poem, and had read the poem to some friends sitting on the porch, among them Mr. Jefferson Davis. From Alleghany Springs he wrote his wife that new strength and new serenity "continually flash from out the gorges, the mountains, and the streams into the heart and charge it as the lightnings charge the earth with subtle and heavenly fires." Lanier's soul belonged to music more than to any other form of art, and more than any other has he linked music with poetry and the ever-varying phenomena of Nature. Of a perfect day in Macon he wrote: "If the year was an orchestra, to-day would be the calm, passionate, even, intense, quiet, full, ineffable flute therein."

In November, 1872, Lanier went to San Antonio in quest of health, which he did not find. Incidentally, he found hitherto unrevealed depths of feeling in his "poor old flute" which caused the old leader of the Maennerchor, who knew the whole world of music, to cry out with enthusiasm that he had "never heard de flude accompany itself pefore."

That part of his musical life which Sidney Lanier gave to the world was for the most part spent in Baltimore, where he played in the Peabody Orchestra, the Germania Maennerchor, and other music societies. An old German musician who used to play with him in the Orchestra told me that Lanier was the finest flutist he had ever heard.

It was in Baltimore, too, that he gave the lectures which resulted in his most important prose-writings, "The Science of English Verse," "The English Novel," "Shakespeare and His Forerunners."

In August, 1874, at Sunnyside, Georgia, amid the loneliness of abandoned farms, the glory of cornfields, and the mysterious beauty of forest, he wrote "Corn,*" the first of his poems to attract the attention of the country. It was published in *Lippincott's* in 1875. Charlotte Cushman was so charmed by it that she sought out the author in Baltimore, and the two became good friends.

At 64 Centre Street, Baltimore, Lanier wrote "The Symphony," which he said took hold of him "about four days ago like a real

* See page 859.

James River agree, and I have been in a mortal shake with the same, day and night, ever since," which is the only way that a real poem or real music or a real picture ever can get into the world. He says that he "will be rejoiced when it is finished, for it verily racks all the bones of my spirit." It appeared in *Lippincott's*, June, 1875.

Lanier was at 66 Centre Street, Baltimore, when he wrote the words of the Centennial Cantata, which he said he "tried to make as simple and candid as a melody of Beethoven." He wrote to a friend that he was not disturbed because a paper had said that the poem of the Cantata was like a "communication from the spirit of Nat Lee through a Bedlamite medium." It was "but a little grotesque episode, as when a catbird paused in the midst of the most exquisite roulades and melodies to mew and then take up his song again."



In December of that year he was compelled to seek a milder climate in Florida, taking with him a commission to write a book about Florida for the J. B. Lippincott Company. Upon arriving at Tampa, he wrote to a friend:

Tampa is the most forlorn collection of little one-story frame houses imaginable, and as May and I walked behind our landlord, who was piloting us to Orange Grove Hotel, our hearts fell nearer and nearer towards the sand through which we dragged. Presently we turned a corner and were agreeably surprised to find ourselves in front of a large three-story house with old nooks and corners, clean and comfortable in appearance and surrounded by orange trees in full fruit. We have a large room in the second story, opening upon a generous balcony fifty feet long, into which stretch the liberal arms of a fine orange tree holding out their fruitage to our very lips. In front is a sort of open plaza containing a pretty group of gnarled live-oaks full of moss and mistletoe.

In May he made an excursion of which he wrote:

For a perfect journey God gave us a perfect day. The little Ocklawaha steamboat *Marion*—a steamboat which is like nothing in the world so much as a Pensacola gopher with a preposterously exaggerated back—had started from Palatka some hours before daylight, having taken on her passengers the night previous; and by seven o'clock of of such a May morning as no words could describe, unless words were themselves May mornings, we had made the twenty-five miles up the St. John's to where the Ocklawaha flows into that stream nearly opposite Welaka, one hundred miles above Jacksonville.

It was on this journey that he saw the most magnificent residence that he had ever beheld, the home of an old friend of his, an alligator,

who possessed a number of such palatial mansions and could change his residence at any time by the simple process of swimming from one to another.

On his return to Baltimore he lived at 55 Lexington in four rooms arranged as a French flat. He makes mention of a gas stove "on which my comrade magically produces the best coffee in the world, and this, with fresh eggs (boiled through the same handy little machine), bread, butter, and milk, forms our breakfast." December 3 he writes from the little French flat, announcing that he "has plunged in and brought forth captive a long Christmas poem for *Every Saturday*," a Baltimore weekly publication. The poem was "Hard Times in Elfland." He says, "Wife and I have been to look at a lovely house with eight rooms and many charming appliances," whereof the rent was less than that of the four rooms.

The next month he writes from 33 Denmead Street, the eight-room house, to which he had gone, with the attendant necessity of buying "at least three hundred twenty-seven household utensils" and "hiring a colored gentlewoman who is willing to wear out my carpets, burn out my range, freeze out my water-pipes, and be generally useful." He mentions having written a couple of poems, and part of an essay on Beethoven and Bismarck, but his chief delight is in his new home, which invests him with the dignity of paying taxes and water rates. He takes the view that no man is a Bohemian who has to pay water rates and street tax.



In addition to supporting his new dignity he finds time and strength for his usual work, and he writes on January 30, 1878: "I have been mainly at work on some unimportant prose matter for pot-boilers, but I get off a short poem occasionally, and in the background of my mind am writing my *Jacquerie*." Unfortunately, "*Jacquerie*" remained in the background of his mind, with the exception of two songs—all we have to indicate what a stirring presentation our literature might have had of the fourteenth century awakening of "*Jacques Bonhomme*," that early precursor of the more terrible arousing in 'Ninety-Three.

In the latter part of the year Lanier was living at Number 180 St. Paul Street, and in December he wrote to a friend: "Bayard Taylor's death slices a huge cantle out of the world. . . . It only seems that he has gone to some other Germany a little farther off. . . . He was such a fine fellow, one almost thinks he might have talked Death over and made him forego his stroke."

At Bayard Taylor's home, where Lanier visited, were two immense chestnut trees, much loved by the two poets. Mrs. Taylor wrote that one of the trees died soon after the death of its poet owner. The other

lingered until a short time after the passing of Lanier. It was in connection with the lines of the "Cantata," written in the Baltimore home of the Southern poet, that the poet friends began a long-continued series of letters which one loves to read on a winter night, when the winds are battling with the world outside, and the fire gleams redly in the open grate, and the lamp burns softly on the library table, and all things invite to poetic dreams.

November 12, 1880, Sidney Lanier wrote to his publisher a letter of appreciation of the beautiful work done upon his volume, "The Boy's King Arthur." It is dated at Number 435 North Calvert Street, the latest Baltimore address that we have.



The distinction Sidney Lanier achieved as first flutist in the orchestra of the Peabody Institute led to an offer of a position in the Thomas Orchestra, which the condition of his health did not permit him to accept.

In the summer of 1880 his "Science of English Verse" was published. "Shakespeare and His Forerunners" resulted from his work with his classes in Elizabethan Poetry. "The English Novel" is the course of lectures on "Personality Illustrated by the Development of Fiction," delivered at Johns Hopkins University in the winter of 1880-'81. As we read the printed work in its depth and strength, we do not realize that his wife took the notes from his whispered dictation, and that his auditors as they listened trembled lest, with each sentence, that deep musical voice should fall on eternal silence. All this while he had been working at lectures and boys' books when, as he said, "a thousand songs are singing in my heart that will certainly kill me if I do not utter them soon." One of the thousand, "Sunrise," he uttered with a temperature of 104 degrees burning out his life; but it is full of the rapture of the dawn.

To the pines of North Carolina the poet was taken, in the hope that they might give him of their strength. But the wind-song through their swaying branches lulled him to his last earthly sleep. On the 7th of September the narrow stream of his earthly existence broadened and deepened and flowed triumphantly into the great ocean of Eternal Life.



CORN *

BY SIDNEY LANIER

TO-DAY the woods are trembling through and through
With shimmering forms, that flash into my view,
Then melt in green as dawn-stars melt in blue.

The leaves that wave against my cheek caress

Like women's hands; the embracing boughs express

A subtlety of mighty tenderness;

The copse-depths into little noises start,

That sound anon like beatings of a heart,

Anon like talk 'twixt lips not far apart.

The beech dreams balm, as a dreamer hums a song,

Through whose vague sweet float expirations strong

From lithe young hickories, breathing deep and long

With stress and urgency bold of inward spring,

And ecstasy of burgeoning.

Now, since the dew-plashed road of morn is dry,

Come daintier smells, linked in soft company,

Like velvet-slippered ladies pacing by.

Long muscadines,

Like Jove's locks curled round foreheads of great pines,

Breathe out ambrosial passion from their vines.

I pray with mosses, ferns and flowers shy

That hide like gentle nuns from human eye,

To lift adoring odors to the sky.

I hear faint bridal-sighs of blissful green,

Dying to kindred silences serene,

As dim lights melt into a pleasant sheen.

I start at fragmentary whispers, blown

From undertalks of leafy loves unknown,

Vague purports sweet, of inarticulate tone.

Dreaming of gods, men, nuns and brides, between

Old companies of oaks that inward lean

To join their radiant amplitudes of green,

I slowly move, with ranging looks that pass

Up from the matted miracles of grass

Into yon veined complex of space,

Where sky and leafage interlace

So close the heaven of blue is seen

Inwoven with a heaven of green.

I wander to the zigzag-cornered fence

Where sassafras, intrenched in brambles dense,

Contests with stolid vehemence

The march of culture, setting limb and thorn,

Like pikes, against the army of the corn.

There, while I pause, before mine eyes,

Out of the silent corn-ranks, rise

Inward dignities

*Reprinted from LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE, February, 1875. See article, "The Sunrise Poet," page 851.

And large benignities and insights wise,
 Graces and modest majesties.
 Thus, without tilth, I house a wondrous yield;
 Thus, without theft, I reap another's field,
 And store quintuple harvests in my heart concealed.

See, out of line a single corn-stem stands
 Advanced beyond the foremost of his bands,
 And waves his blades upon the very edge
 And hottest thicket of the battling hedge.
 Thou lustrous stalk, that canst not walk nor talk,
 Still dost thou type the poet-soul sublime
 That leads the vanward of his timid time,
 And sings up cowards with commanding rhyme—
 Soul calm, like thee, yet fain, like thee, to grow
 By double increment, above, below;
 Soul homely, as thou art, yet rich in grace like thee,
 Teaching the yeomen selfless chivalry,
 That moves in gentle curves of courtesy;
 Soul filled like thy long veins with sweetness tense,
 By every godlike sense
 Transmuted from the four wild elements.
 Toward the empyrean
 Thou reachest higher up than mortal man,
 Yet ever piercest downward in the mould,
 And keepest hold
 Upon the reverend and steadfast earth
 That gave thee birth.
 Yea, standest smiling in thy very grave,
 Serene and brave,
 With unremitting breath
 Inhaling life from death,
 Thine epitaph writ fair in fruitage eloquent,
 Thy living self thy monument.

As poets should,
 Thou hast built up thy hardihood
 With wondrous-varying food,
 Drawn in select proportion fair
 From solid mould and vagrant air;
 From terrors of the dreadful night,
 And joyful light;
 From antique ashes, whose departed flame
 In thee has finer life and longer fame;
 From wounds and balms,
 From storms and calms,
 From potsherds and dry bones,
 And ruin-stones.
 So to thy vigorous substance thou hast wrought
 Whate'er the hand of Circumstance hath brought;
 Yea, into cool solacing green hast spun
 White radiance hot from out the sun.
 So thou dost mutually leaven
 Strength of earth with grace of heaven;

So thou dost marry new and old
 Into a one of higher mould;
 So thou dost reconcile the hot and cold,
 The dark and bright,
 And many a heart-perplexing opposite;
 And so,
 Akin by blood to high and low,
 Fitly thou playest out thy poet's part,
 Richly expending thy much bruised heart
 In equal care to nourish lord in hall
 Or beast in stall:
 Thou took'st from all that thou might'st give to all.

O steadfast dweller on the selfsame spot
 Where thou wast born, that still repinest not—
 Type of the home-fond heart, the happy lot!—
 Deeply thy mild content rebukes the land
 Whose flimsy homes, built on the shifting sand
 Of trade, for ever rise and fall
 With alternation whimsical,
 Enduring scarce a day,
 Then swept away
 By swift engulfments of incalculable tides
 Whereon capricious Commerce rides.

Look, thou substantial spirit of content!
 Across this little vale, thy continent,
 To where, beyond the mouldering mill,
 Yon old deserted Georgian hill
 Bares to the sun his piteous aged creast
 And seamy breast,
 By restless-hearted children left to lie
 Untended there beneath the heedless sky,
 As barbarous folk expose their old to die.
 Upon that generous swelling side,

 Now scarified
 By keen neglect, and all unfurrowed save
 By gullies red as lash-marks on a slave,
 Dwelt one I knew of old, who played at toil,
 And dreamed himself a tiller of the soil.
 Scorning the slow reward of patient grain,
 He sowed his soul with hopes of swifter gain,
 Then sat him down and waited for the rain.
 He sailed in borrowed ships of usury—
 A foolish Jason on a treacherous sea,
 Seeking the Fleece and finding misery.
 Lulled by smooth-rippling loans, in idle trance
 He lay, content that unthrift Circumstance
 Should plough for him the stony field of Chance.
 Yea, gathering crops whose worth no man might tell,
 He staked his life on a game of Buy-and-Sell,
 And turned each field into a gambler's hell.
 Aye, as each year began,
 My farmer to the neighboring city ran.

Passed with a mournful anxious face
 Into the banker's inner place;
 Parleyed, excused, pleaded for longer grace,
 Railed at the drought, the worm, the rust, the grass,
 Protested ne'er again 't would come to pass
 Such troops of ills his labors should harass;
 Politely swallowed searching questions rude,
 And kissed the dust to melt his Dives's mood.
 At last, small loans by pledges great renewed,
 He issues smiling from the fatal door,
 And buys with lavish hand his yearly store
 Till his small borrowings will yield no more.
 Aye, as each year declined,
 With bitter heart and ever-brooding mind
 He mourned his fate unkind.
 In dust, in rain, with might and main,
 He nursed his cotton, cursed his grain,
 Fretted for news that made him fret again,
 Snatched at each telegram of Future Sale,
 And thrilled with Bulls' or Bears' alternate wail—
 In hope or fear alike for ever pale.
 And thus from year to year, through hope and fear,
 With many a curse and many a secret tear,
 Striving in vain his cloud of debt to clear,
 At last
 He woke to find his foolish dreaming past,
 Beheld his best-of-life the easy prey
 Of quacks and scamps, and all the vile array
 That line the way,
 From thieving statesman down to petty knave;
 Yea, saw himself, for all his bragging brave,
 A gamester's catpaw and a banker's slave.
 Then, worn and gray, and sick with deep unrest,
 He fled away into the oblivious West,
 Unmourned, unblest.

Old hill! old hill! thou gashed and hairy Lear
 Whom the divine Cordelia of the year,
 E'en pitying Spring, will vainly strive to cheer—
 King, but too poor for any man to own,
 Discrowned, undaughtered and alone,
 Yet shall the great God turn thy fate,
 And bring thee back into thy monarch's state
 And majesty immaculate;
 So, through hot waverings of the August morn,
 A vision of great treasuries of corn
 Thou bearest in thy vasty sides forlorn,
 For largesse to some future bolder heart
 That manfully shall take thy part,
 And tend thee,
 And defend thee,
 With antique sinew and with modern art.

THE CHILD WHO HAD EVERYTHING BUT A CHRISTMAS GHOST-STORY

By John Kendrick Bangs

Author of "Mollie and the Unwise Man Abroad," "The Idiot," etc.

I.

I KNEW it was coming long before it got there. Every symptom was in sight. I had grown fidgety, and sat fearful of something overpoweringly impending. Strange noises filled the house. Things generally, according to their nature, severally creaked, soughed, and moaned. There was a ghost on the way. That was perfectly clear to an expert in uncanny visitations of my wide experience, and I heartily wished it were not. There was a time when I welcomed such visitors with open arms, because there was a decided demand for them in the literary market, and I had been able to turn a great variety of spooks into anywhere from three thousand to five thousand words apiece at five cents a word, but now the age had grown too sceptical to swallow ghostly reminiscence with any degree of satisfaction. People had grown tired of hearing about Visions, and desired that their tales should reek with the scent of gasoline, quiver with the superfervid fever of tangential loves, and crash with moral thunderbolts aimed against malefactors of great achievement and high social and commercial standing. Wherefore it seemed an egregious waste of time for me to dally with a spook, or with anything else, for that matter, that had no strictly utilitarian value to one so professionally pressed as I was, and especially at a moment like that—it was Christmas morning and the hour was twenty-eight minutes after two—when I was so busy preparing my Ode to June, and trying to work out the details of a midsummer romance in time for the market for such productions early in the coming January.

And right in the midst of all this pressure there rose up these beastly symptoms of an impending visitation. At first I strove to fight them off, but as the minutes passed they became so obsessively intrusive that I could not concentrate upon the work in hand, and I resolved to have it over with.

"Oh, well," said I, striking a few impatient chords upon my type-writing machine, "if you insist upon coming, come, and let's have done with it."

I roared this out, addressing the dim depths of the adjoining apartment, whence had risen the first dank apprehension of the uncanny something that had come to pester me.

"This is my busy night," I went on, when nothing happened in response to my summons, "and I give you fair warning that, however psychic I may be now, I've got too much to do to stay so much longer. If you're going to haunt, haunt!"

It was in response to this appeal that the thing first manifested itself to the eye. It took the shape first of a very slight veil of green fog, which shortly began to swirl slowly from the darkness of the other room through the intervening portières into my den. Once within, it increased the vigor of its swirl, until almost before I knew it there was spinning immediately before my desk something in the nature of a misty maelstrom, buzzing around like a pin-wheel in action.

"Very pretty—very pretty indeed," said I, a trifle sarcastically, refusing to be impressed, "but I don't care for pyrotechnics. I suppose," I added flippantly, "that you are what might be called a mince-pyrotechnic, eh?"

Whether it was the quality of my jest, or some other inward pang due to its gyratory behavior, that caused it I know not, but as I spoke a deep groan issued from the centre of the whirling mist, and then out of its indeterminateness there was resolved the hazy figure of an angel—only, she was an intensely modern angel. She wore a hobble-skirt instead of the usual flowing robes of ladies of the supernal order, and her halo, instead of hovering over her head as used to be the correct manner of wearing these hard-won adornments, had perforce become a mere golden fillet binding together the great mass of finger-curls and other distinctly yellow capillary attractions that stretched out from the back of her cerebellum for two or three feet, like a monumental psyche-knot. I could hardly restrain a shudder as I realized the theatric quality of the lady's appearance, and I honestly dreaded the possible consequences of her visit. We live in a tolerably censorious age, and I did not care to be seen in the company of such a peroxidized vision as she appeared to be.

"I am afraid, madam," said I, shrinking back against the wall as she approached—"I am very much afraid that you have got into the wrong house. Mr. Slatherberry, the theatrical manager, lives next door."

She paid no attention to this observation, but, holding out a compelling hand, bade me come along with her, her voice having about it all the musical charm of an oboe suffering from bronchitis.

"Not in a year of Sundays I won't!" I retorted. "I am a respectable man, a steady church-goer, a trustee for several philanthropic insti-

tutions, and a Sunday-School teacher. I don't wish to be impolite, but really, madam, rich as I am in reputation, I am too poor to be seen in public with you."

"I am a spirit," she began.

"I'll take your word for it," I interjected, and I could see that she told the truth, for she was entirely diaphanous, so much so indeed that one could perceive the piano in the other room with perfect clarity through her intervening shadiness. "It is, however, the unfortunate fact that I have sworn off spirits."

"None the less," she returned, her eye flashing and her hand held forth peremptorily, "you must come. It is your predestined doom."

My next remark I am not wholly clear about, but, as I remember it, it sounded something like "I'll be doomed if I do!" whereupon she threatened me.

"It is useless to resist," she said. "If you decline to come voluntarily, I shall hypnotize you and force you to follow me. We have need of you."

"But, my dear lady," I pleaded, "please have some regard for my position. I never did any of you spirits any harm. I've treated every visitor from the spirit-land with the most distinguished consideration, and I feel that you owe it to me to be regardful of my good name. Suppose you take a look at yourself in yonder looking-glass, and then say if you think it fair to compel a decent, law-abiding man, of domestic inclinations like myself, to be seen in public with—well, with such a looking head of hair as that of yours."

My visitor laughed heartily.

"Oh, if that's all," she said, most amiably, "we can arrange matters in a jiffy. Your wife possesses a hooded mackintosh, does she not? I think I saw something of the kind hanging on the hat-rack as I floated in. I will wear that if it will make you feel any easier."

"It certainly would," said I; "but see here—can't you scare up some other cavalier to escort you to the haven of your desires?"

She fixed a sternly steady eye upon me for a moment.

"Are n't you the man who wrote the lines,

The World's a green and gladsome ball,
And Love's the Ruler of it all,
And Life's the chance vouchsafed to me
For Deeds and Gifts of Sympathy?

Did n't you write that?" she demanded.

"I did, madam," said I, "and I meant every word of it, but what of it? Is that any reason why I should be seen on a public highway with a lady-ghost of your especial kind?"

"Enough of your objections," she retorted firmly. "You are the

person for whom I have been sent. We have a case needing your immediate attention. The only question is, will you come pleasantly and of your own free will, or must I resort to extreme measures?"

These words were spoken with such determination that I realized that further resistance was useless, and I yielded.

"All right," said I. "On your way. I'll follow."

"Good!" she cried, her face wreathing with a pleasant little nile-green smile. "Get the mackintosh, and we'll be off. There's no time to lose," she added, as the clock in the tower on the square boomed out the hour of three.

"What is this anyhow?" I demanded, as I helped her on with the mackintosh and saw that the hood covered every vestige of that awful coiffure. "Another case of Scrooge?"

"Sort of," she replied as, hooking her arm in mine, she led me forth into the night.

II.

WE passed over to Fifth Avenue, and proceeded uptown at a pace which reminded me of the active gait of my youth. My footsteps had grown unwontedly light, and we covered the first ten blocks in about three minutes.

"We don't seem to be headed for the slums," I panted.

"Indeed, we are not," she retorted. "There is no need of carrying coals to Newcastle on this occasion. This isn't a slum case. It's far more acute than that."

A tear came forth from her eye and trickled down over the mackintosh.

"It is a peculiarity of modern effort on behalf of suffering humanity," she went on, "that it is concentrated upon the relief of the misery of the so-called *submerged*, to the utter neglect of the often more poignant needs of the *emerged*. We have workers by the thousand in the slums, doing all that can be done, and successfully too, to relieve the unhappy condition of the poor, but nobody ever seems to think of the sorrows of the starving hundreds on upper Fifth Avenue."

"See here, madam," said I, stopping suddenly short under a lamp-post in front of the Public Library, "I want to tell you right now that if you think you are going to take me into any of the homes of the hopelessly rich at this time of the morning, you are the most mightily mistaken creature that ever wore a psyche-knot. Why, great heavens, my dear lady, suppose the owner of the house were to wake up and demand to know what I was doing there at this time of night? What could I say?"

"You have gone on slumming parties, have n't you?" she demanded coldly.

"Often," said I. "But that's different."

"Why?" she asked, with a simplicity that baffled me. "Is it any worse for you to intrude upon the home of a Fifth Avenue millionaire than it is to go unasked into the small, squalid tenement of some poor sweat-shop worker on the East Side?"

"Oh, but it's different," I protested. "I go there to see if there is anything I can do to relieve the unhappy condition of the persons who live in the slums."

"No doubt," said she. "I'll take your word for it, but is that any reason why you should neglect the sufferers who live in these marble palaces?"

As she spoke, she hooked hold of my arm once more, and in a moment we were climbing the front door steps of a palatial residence. The house showed a dark and forbidding front at that hour in the morning despite its marble splendors, and I was glad to note that the massive grille doors of wrought-iron were heavily barred.

"It's useless, you see. We're locked out," I ventured.

"Indeed?" she retorted, with a sarcastic smile, as she seized my hand in her icy grip and literally pulled me after her through the marble front of the dwelling. "What have we to do with bolts and bars?"

"I don't know," said I ruefully, "but I have a notion that if I don't bolt I'll get the bars all right."

I could see them coming, and they were headed straight for me.

"All you have to do is to follow me," she went on, as we floated upward for two flights, paying but little attention to the treasures of art that lined the walls, and finally passed into a superbly lighted salon, more daintily beautiful than anything of the kind I had ever seen before.

"Jove!" I ejaculated, standing amazed in the presence of such luxury and beauty. "I did not realize that with all her treasures New York held anything quite so fine as this. What is it, a music-room?"

"It is the nursery," said my companion. "Look about you and see for yourself."

I did as I was bade, and such an array of toys as that inspection revealed! Truly it looked as if the toy-market in all sections of the world had been levied upon for tribute. Had all the famous toy emporiums of Nuremburg itself been transported thither bodily, there could not have been playthings in greater variety than there greeted my eye. From the most insignificant of tin-soldiers to the most intricate of mechanical toys for the delectation of the youthful mind, nothing that I could think of was missing.

The tin-soldiers as ever had a fascination for me, and in an instant I was down upon the floor, ranging them in their serried ranks, while the face of my companion wreathed with an indulgent smile.

"You'll do," said she, as I loaded a little spring-cannon with a stub

of a lead-pencil and bowled over half a regiment with one well-directed shot.

"These are the finest tin-soldiers I ever saw!" I cried with enthusiasm.

"Only they're not tin," said she. "Solid silver, every man-jack of them—except the officers—they're made of platinum."

"And will you look at that little electric railroad!" I cried, my eye ranging to the other end of the salon. "Stations, switches, danger-signals, cars of all kinds, and even miniature Pullmans, with real little berths that can be let up and down—who is the lucky kid who's getting all these beautiful things?"

"Sh!" she whispered, putting her finger to her lips. "He is coming—go on and play. Pretend you don't see him until he speaks to you."

As she spoke, a door at the far end of the apartment swung gently open, and a little boy tiptoed softly in. He was a golden-haired little chap, and I fell in love with his soft, dreamy eyes the moment my own rested upon them. I could not help glancing up furtively to see his joy over the discovery of all these wondrous possessions, but alas, to my surprise, there was only an unemotional stare in his eyes as they swept the aggregation of childish treasures. Then, on a sudden, he saw me, squatting on the floor, setting up again the army of silver warriors.

"How do you do?" he said gently, but with just a touch of weariness in his sad little voice.

"Good morning, and a Merry Christmas to you, sir," I replied.

"What are you doing?" he asked, drawing near, and watching me with a good deal of seeming curiosity.

"I am playing with your soldiers," said I. "I hope you don't mind?"

"Oh, indeed," he replied; "but what do you mean by that? What is playing?"

I could hardly believe my ears.

"What is what?" said I.

"You said you were playing, sir," said he, "and I don't know exactly what you mean."

"Why," said I, scratching my head hard in a mad quest for a definition, for I could not for the life of me think of the answer to his question offhand, any more than I could define one of the elements. "Playing is—why, it's playing, laddy. Don't you know what it is to play?"

"Oh, yes," said he. "It's what you do on the piano—I've been taught to play on the piano, sir."

"Oh, but this is different," said I. "This kind is fun—it's what most little boys do with their toys."

"You mean—breaking them?" said he.

"No, indeed," said I. "It's getting all the fun there is out of them."

"I think I should like to do that," said he, with a fixed gaze upon the soldiers. "Can a little fellow like me learn to play that way?"

"Well, rather, kiddie," said I, reaching out and taking him by the hand. "Sit down here on the floor alongside of me, and I'll show you."

"Oh, no," said he, drawing back; "I—I can't sit on the floor. I'd catch cold."

"Now, who under the canopy told you that?" I demanded, somewhat impatiently, I fear.

"My governesses and both my nurses, sir," said he. "You see, there are drafts——"

"Well, there won't be any drafts this time," said I. "Just you sit down here, and we'll have a game of marbles—ever play marbles with your father?"

"No, sir," he replied. "He's always too busy, and neither of my nurses has ever known how."

"But your mother comes up here and plays games with you sometimes, does n't she?" I asked.

"Mother is busy, too," said the child. "Besides, she would n't care for a game which you had to sit on the floor to——"

I sprang to my feet and lifted him bodily in my arms, and, after squatting him over by the fireplace where if there were any drafts at all they would be as harmless as a summer breeze, I took up a similar position on the other side of the room, and initiated him into the mystery of miggles as well as I could, considering that all his marbles were real agates.

"You don't happen to have a china-alley anywhere, do you?" I asked.

"No, sir," he answered. "We only have china plates——"

"Never mind," I interrupted. "We can get along very nicely with these."

And then for half an hour, despite the rich quality of our paraphernalia, that little boy and I indulged in a glorious game of real plebeian miggs, and it was a joy to see how quickly his stiff little fingers relaxed and adapted themselves to the uses of his eye, which was as accurate as it was deeply blue. So expert did he become that in a short while he had completely cleaned me out, giving joyous little cries of delight with every hit, and then we turned our attention to the soldiers.

"I want some playing now," he said gleefully, as I informed me that he had beaten me out of my boots at one of my best games. "Show me what you were doing with those soldiers when I came in."

"All right," said I, obeying with alacrity. "First, we'll have a parade."

I started a great talking-machine standing in one corner of the room off on a spirited military march, and inside of ten minutes, with his

assistance, I had all the troops out and to all intents and purposes bravely swinging by to the martial music of Sousa.

"How's that?" said I, when we had got the whole corps arranged to our satisfaction.

"Fine!" he cried, jumping up and down upon the floor and clapping his hands with glee. "I've got lots more of these stored away in my toy-closet," he went on, "but I never knew that you could do such things as this with them."

"But what did you think they were for?" I asked.

"Why—just to—to keep," he said hesitatingly.

"Wait a minute," said I, wheeling a couple of cannon off to a distance of a yard from the passing troops. "I'll show you something else you can do with them."

I loaded both cannon to the muzzle with dried pease, and showed him how to shoot.

"Now," said I, "*fire!*"

He snapped the spring, and the dried pease flew out like death-dealing shells in war. In a moment the platinum commander of the forces, and about thirty-seven solid silver warriors, lay flat on their backs. It needed only a little red ink on the carpet to reproduce in miniature a scene of great carnage, but I shall never forget the expression of mingled joy and regret on his countenance as those creatures went down.

"Don't you like it, son?" I asked.

"I don't know," he said, with an anxious glance at the prostrate warriors. "They are n't deaded, are they?"

"Of course not," said I, restoring the presumably defunct troopers to life by setting them up again. "The only thing that'll dead a soldier like these is to step on him. Try the other gun."

Thus reassured, he did as I bade him, and again the proud paraders went down, this time amid shouts of glee. And so we passed an all too fleeting two hours, that little boy and I. Through the whole list of his famous toys we went, and as well as I could I taught him the delicious uses of each and all of them, until finally he seemed to grow weary, and so, drawing up a big arm-chair before the fire and taking his tired little body into my lap, with his tousled head cuddled up close over the spot where my heart is alleged to be, I started to read a story to him out of one of the many beautiful books that had been provided for him by his generous parents. But I had not gone far when I saw that his attention was wandering.

"Perhaps you'd rather have me tell you a story instead of reading it," said I.

"What's to tell a story?" he asked, fixing his blue eyes gravely upon mine.

"Great Scott, kiddie!" said I, "didn't anybody ever tell you a story?"

"No, sir," he replied sleepily; "I get read to every afternoon by my governess, but nobody ever told me a story."

"Well, just you listen to this," said I, giving him a hearty squeeze. "Once upon a time there was a little boy," I began, "and he lived in a beautiful house not far from the Park, and his daddy——"

"What's a daddy?" asked the child, looking up into my face.

"Why, a daddy is a little boy's father," I explained. "You've got a daddy——"

"Oh, yes," he said. "If a daddy is a father, I've got one. I saw him yesterday," he added.

"Oh, did you?" said I. "And what did he say to you?"

"He said he was glad to see me and hoped I was a good boy," said the child. "He seemed very glad when I told him I hoped so, too, and he gave me all these things here—he and my mother."

"That was very nice of them," said I huskily.

"And they're both coming up some time to-day or to-morrow to see if I like them," said the lad.

"And what are you going to say?" I asked, with difficulty getting the words out over a most unaccountable lump that had arisen in my throat.

"I'm going to tell them," he began, as his eyes closed sleepily, "that I like them all very, very much."

"And which one of them all do you like the best?" said I.

He snuggled up closer in my arms, and, raising his little head a trifle higher, he kissed me on the tip end of my chin, and murmured softly as he dropped off to sleep,

"You!"

III.

"GOOD-NIGHT," said my spectral visitor as she left me, once more bending over my desk, whither I had been retransported without my knowledge, for I must have fallen asleep, too, with that little boy in my arms. "You have done a good night's work."

"Have I?" said I, rubbing my eyes to see if I were really awake. "But tell me—who was that little kiddie anyhow?"

"He?" she answered with a smile. "Why, he is the Child Who Has Everything But."

And then she vanished from my sight.

"Everything but what?" I cried, starting up and peering into the darkness into which she had disappeared.

But there was no response, and I was left alone to guess the answer to my question.

RED BIRD

By Elizabeth Maury Coombs

BILL HERON shut the door of his cabin after him with some difficulty, for the late December snow had blown in under it and not only lay in a ridge along the crack, but formed a round hillock opposite the cat-hole. Following close in Bill's wake, the north-wind drifted the snow, dry as powder, across the floor almost to the strip of rag carpet which ran the length of the room. It was a wintry welcome.

The hunter threw down his armful of snowy logs, and, kneeling, uncovered the glowing oak-chunk from its heap of ashes. Then he rubbed his doubled-up hands and opened and shut his crumpled fingers above the bed of red coals before putting on the light-wood knot.

The replenished fire sent up first a cloud of fragrant, black smoke, and then darted pointed flames that lit up the low rafters, reddening the hanging strings of peppers, and silhouetting the brown-skinned onions, the dried bunch of gray-green sage, and the one little smoke-blackened ham which swayed fitfully in the draft.

Outside, the old dog, Song, saw the crack of light beneath the door and scratched, not with the timid appeal of one doubtful of its welcome, but boldly, as an inmate demanding instant admittance—a right which the old man did not deny. Wearily the old creature threw herself on the warmest spot of the hearthstone, and commenced her interminable surgical operations on the thorns in her lame front foot. The old man paused to pat her fondly before casting the logs on the blaze and crowning them at last with a huge octopus-like stump.

"Ya-as," he mumbled, when he had finished with the fire and crossed to the dim corner which seemed to hide under a low window, "ya-as, he sont the cawn, and yer eats twenty-one ears a day."

He glanced whimsically toward a square hole he had sawed in the wall between the cabin and the old kitchen which served as a stable since the barn roof had given way under weight of years and a heavy snow two winters before.

The petted mare whinnied as old Bill gathered up her ration of corn in the crook of his arm and started across the room. When he dumped his load into her manger, she whiffled with her gray velvety

lips, and pawed like a spoilt child. Seeing his favorite rattling the ears about and crunching great bites with immense satisfaction, her master—or, rather, her slave—moved back to the door. Taking the piece of chalk that hung by a leathern string from a nail, he calculated a moment with the chalk in his lips, then muttered in halting words:

"Three tubs—that's a bar'l—three dollars." Turning to a column of figures, he added painfully, counting on knotty old fingers now and then to aid his rather shaky arithmetic.

"She's all in. It's two hundred dollars down—and that's all you're wuth—to him, Red Bird."

The horse, looking through the improvised window, answered with a questioning nicker as she heard her name.

"I was n't callin' yer, Honey," returned the old fellow. He sank down in the split-bottomed chair, chafing his hands before the visible warmth the logs sent out. "You have sho et, though, Red Bird. You have et twenty acres of mountain land, more or less, as the deeds say—a gift from a king to my daddy's daddy, an' now ye have et yerself. Wal, ye air good enough to eat yer own self. Ye air sweet ez long-sweetenin' used ter be when me an' yo' ma useter git it sometimes endurin' of the war."

While the old man was holding converse with his pet, a brisk exchange of domestic amenities was taking place at the County poorhouse, a mile down in the valley from Heron's little cabin.

"Amos Jeemes," cried the wife of the poorhouse keeper to her spouse, as she bustled in with a covered basket in her hand, "here is this here mink pie and loaf cake I told you to take to old man Heron nigh about an hour ago. Now, I ask, air ye goin' to take it, or air ye goin' to leave it? 'Cause ef so be as ye air goin' to leave it, I'll lay I'll make you suck sorrow for yer triflin' doin's as long as yer name is Amos Jeemes."

"Will yer have it tuk now, Miss Sukey, or wait till I git my hat?—which I ain't got the remotest idee what it is."

"I'll have it tuk now! Ye was born bar-headed, and bar-headed ye'll die—unless somebody turns up the whole house to find yo' hat."

"Ole 'oman," said Amos, rather gravely looking in the basket, "don't ye 'member I tole ye the Board said we wa'n't to give alms from the House? These here is the County victuals."

"Amos Jeemes," answered his wife, folding her arms, "air you married to the County Commissioners of Grayson County, or to me? Ef they air yo' lawful wedded wife, go an' live with 'em as sich, an' let them find yo' hat an' mend yo' breeches with holes in the seats ez big ez a flour barrel, not to speak of a-listenin' to yo' jow-rowin' fer e'ena'most forty years, till they're deaf in one year and can't hear outen tuther."

"Why 'n' you carry it yo'self? I ain't got no hankerin' to climb that ar rock pile to-night."

"I would ha' gone fast enough, but that contrary ole hawk is skittish of women-folks."

"Mo' specially when they be peart and spry as you be, Miss Sukey," laughed her husband, dodging as his wife reached her ponderous hand over and set an old torn straw hat down on his head.

"There, take yo' ole duck's nest of a last summer's hat an' go 'long." After these connubial passages, which denote true happiness in married life among the mountaineers, Amos set off.

The soft snow made a padding for his feet as he went up the steep road of rocks that led to Heron's Nest, as the mountain was called. He passed, on a comparatively level clearing, the well-filled corn-cribs and munching cattle of his nearest neighbor, George—still called by his baby name of Georgie—Grist. Georgie was a prosperous man, with well-tilled fields and, what is more rare, barns and stables able to stand alone, not propped with rails or fence-posts in weak spots. Amos remembered hearing that Grist had a lien on Heron's place, but he mused half-aloud:

"I reckon the old feller's done paid it off—he ain't got nuthin' else fer to spend his money on; any way, I hope he's done paid it, fer don't nuthin' compar to a mortgage fer a healthy appetite to its victuals—it'll eat up a good mountain farm in three shakes of a lamb's tail."

A bright golden light flickered in the wavy glass of the uncurtained cabin windows as Amos wound his way between the slim black cedars that grew all about the yard, looking like well-inked exclamation points on the page of snow.

Amos knocked heartily.

"Come in, whomsoever ye be," said Heron hospitably, as he pulled open his door and let some of the light out into the night. A wakened bird stirred sleepily, fluttering from branch to branch in the evergreen that grew almost at the door.

Amos ducked his head instinctively—as tall men and geese will when entering any gateway. "I be your new neighbor down in the valley, Amos Jeemes," he said by way of introduction. Setting his little basket down, he further explained, "My wife's plumb tired er seein' them Christmas victuals settin' waitin' ter give some of us a pain under *our* weskits, so she sont 'em up to you."

"I'm 'bleeged to her, an' to you for doin' the totin' up Heron's Hill. The road ain't what ye'd call er avenue no time—let alone the last night in December. But I'm 'mazin' glad to see you." Heron's eagle eyes were alight above his hawk-like beak. "Draw up a cheer an' set awhile, won't ye? Not that one," said Bill hurriedly, as Amos

made a motion towards a chair on the other side of the fire, not noticing that a stout leather string was tied across its arms above the seat from knob to knob. "That un was my mother's. I tied that string thar the day she died. I said then no man nur woman—but my wife—should set in mother's cheer. 'T was in a marnar sacred."

Amos looked at Heron indulgently; he was accustomed to the whims of the inmates at the almshouse.

Heron sighed, and they were silent a few minutes until, looking at the chair again, he resumed where he had left off.

"Mother hoped I'd get me a wife when she was gone, but some way I never did," he grinned. "Kinder skittish of women-folks—I reckon you've heard—they kinder startle a feller like a flock er pa'tridges risin' right at his feet. They 'minds me er birds, any way—them flutterin' petticoats is 'mazin' like a bird fluffin' out her feathers an' a-turnin' of her little head one side—thar—but I reckon you knows a heap about the critters that I don't."

Amos shook his head, scratching it a little thoughtfully, as if it were a matter that had received his anxious thought, but had offered him no answer at the end of the riddle book. "I dunno ez I know ez much 'bouten 'em ez I knowed forty years ago," he vouchsafed from the fulness of his experience, "an' I did n't know nothin' 't all then." After another moment of reflection he exclaimed, "But the Lord knows what He meant 'em to be like—ef *He* do!"

Then Heron pursued his quiet meditations aloud. "Women-folks is sorter like a hen. Seems-like they take to gray shawl feathers like a ole dominecker after they git married. I sees 'em at meetin', an' I takes right smart notice when folks ain't lookin'. Soon I likes to see little downy heads peepin' out from under them shawl feathers—jest like a little day-old chick from under its mammy's wing."

A laugh came into old Bill Heron's gray-blue eyes as he went on. "Now cluck 'em to come to git a grain er corn, an' walk round 'em like a darncein' marster. Oh, Mistuh Rooster, yo' day of gettin' any notice is just ez much over ez if ye war a-sizzlin' in the frying-pan. Everything's fer the chickies now—a-scratchin' round the barn do' in the trash, an' a-pickin' up little seeds, an' a-givin' uv 'em to the little cluckies like they war n't a rooster on God's green earth.

"But, friend," said Bill, getting up, "I was jest on the p'int of scrapin' me up a mite er somepin' ter eat. I been huntin' right smart varmints to-day—me an' the Red Bird thar in the cage." The horse whinnied at the mention of her name, and Amos turned, startled at her nearness.

Heron laughed as he patted her nose in passing. "Did n't know ladies was present, did yer? I had her put in thar once when I was sick, an' she proved so companified I ain't never had her moved."

Heron talked on while he went into a closet and commenced officiously rattling around in its emptiness to show his neighbor he had stores of food besides what he was preparing to bring forth.

Presently he came out with three eggs lying in a wooden bowl, on top of about a pint of meal. They were the last in his larder—a fact he would have died rather than disclose to his guest.

"Retch me down that ham, will you, neighbor? You be taller than me, an' I don't 'spect to grow no mo' this season," he chuckled.

"Don't ye pester to set no plate fer me," put in Amos, as he reached for the lone ham. "I skeercely ever eats anything away from home."

"Oh, you must keep me comp'ny," answered Heron heartily. "I'm a right smart cook. Ma used ter say when I brung her her waiter of victuals, 'Why, Son, you'd make some man a mighty good wife.' I was some sore about my size in them days, an' she would laugh an' tease me. We was all by ourselves here a mighty long time after Pa died, an' all the children went to town ter live, an' me an' her would set here roastin' chestnuts an' poppin' corn an' laughin' at the foolishhest kinder things—what nobody else ain't seen any marner er sense in."

All the time the old fellow went on as methodically with the preparation of his supper as some spinster might have done, slicing the ham thin to broil over the coals, stirring the meal into pones which he covered first with a layer of wet hickory leaves, then with dead ashes, finally heaping up a pile of live coals on top. Then he busily fried the eggs with some of the ham fat in his skillet set over the fire on a trivet. Lastly he spread a cloth over the old heavy mahogany table that had been almost the only thing his mother had brought from the more refined home down in the valley when she had run off and married fox-hunting Bill Heron, the father,—never to find out she was poor or lonesome or unhappy, as her relatives had pinned their faith on her doing.

"Draw up a cheer, friend, and set to."

"Your victuals has a rousin' good smell," answered Amos, "an' I'm blamed ef I don't."

That night, as Amos went into his wife's room, after locking up the house, he said:

"I don't see for my life why all this here sympathy is done sot in fer that ole feller. He's as comfortable as a cat in a barn. He had a good light-wood knot fire, an' as good a supper as I ever sot down ter—eggs an' bacon an' corn-pone. An' ef ary man wuth callin' a Virginian wants any better victuals than them—year in an' year out—he 'll have ter go towards heaven to find 'em."

Mrs. James turned over like a haystack under the patchwork quilt

and gave her husband a look that would have withered a pine-tree. Amos was accustomed to such encouragement in the advancement of his opinions.

"Lawsy mussy, ole 'oman, you look at me so sevigrou I done bust my galluses!"

His wife turned again, with grave groans from the bed-springs. "Thank goodness I war raised up to know men war born idjits an' had done lost all the sense they was born with; else I might 'a' done clean lost patience with you, Amos Jeemes. Can't you see that ole curisome varmint would bring out his last dust er meal before you should find out he was hard up? He's got the name of bein' as proud as a Lucifer match. Rich folks kin talk po' an' ack po,' but po' folks ain't goin' ter let they needs be knowed. What is brung outen a cupboard ain't no sign er what's in it—fur from it. But land sakes! I ain't got no time to lay awake here all night tryin' to 'lighten you."

Long after the James nightly gourd-sawing contest had commenced, up in his lone cabin on the mountain old Bill Heron sat by the dying embers, counting over and over on knotty fingers how bit by bit his little inheritance had gone from him. There was not even left to him the home where his father's fathers and their sons, their daughters, and all their eagle-eyed brood—not to speak of their most congenial companions, the red roan horses and spotted hound puppies—had lived and died in the greatest ease and poverty. Finally he rose, leaned long with bowed head on the now warm oak mantel, and then commenced the interminable pottering with which old people make ready for bed, like an old dog turning round and round in his tracks before settling down.

Bill Heron wakened long before the dawn. The objects in the room loomed gigantic in the dusk, and the covered chunk in the fireplace crackled at times faintly. It was not very cold, but the dog, who had sprawled on the hearth when the blaze lit up the cabin and was now curled tightly into a compact ball, shivered and seemed to hug herself a little closer. As Song heard her master stir, she thumped her tail on the floor in a tentative, absent-minded way. She was the last of her pack—for hound puppies pass muster as coin of the realm in some portions of Virginia, and her sisters, Music and Dance, and their children, had been sold, leaving only old Song, whom nobody would buy, for she was lame in the front foot.

"A soft day for a keen scent," was the old hunter's first audible thought—for he thought aloud in the manner of lone dwellers; and Song from the hearthstone thumped her acquiescence.

Bill gave the dog a juicy ham-bone, while he rebuilt the fire, more for her comfort than his own. Dawn had now pastelled the cabin windows shadow-gray, so he gave Red Bird her corn, and then by the light-

wood torch stuck in an iron ring beside her stall, he curried her coat, brushing and rubbing it with his hands until her flanks cast back the torch's flaming reflections like a piece of polished metal.

"I don't feel no call to eat breakfast this mornin', Lady Bird, so jest stand here till I git my horn," he said to the horse when he had saddled her, leading her out in front of the door, where she stood as still as a picture of a horse, silhouetted by the first faint gilded streaks of day.

The old fellow fumbled about in the cabin awhile, then, bringing his horn and gun, he mounted. Laying the gun across the pommel, he turned in the saddle, put the silver mouthpiece of the horn to his lips as he faced to the east, and blew clear and sweet as bird-song a salute to the coming of God's day. The mountains, etched against the brink of dawn, sent back each note from each gray rock on their scarred sides in rippling reverberations. The old hound, starting as if she were a whole pack, gave tongue; the hills, too, gave back her baying as if she were twenty dogs in full cry, and, with a shake of the bridle reins, the old man and the red roan swung into line with as little care as though corn and meat and wine surely awaited their homecoming.

Though the early January days filed past almost arm in arm with night, yet Red Bird diminished rapidly the pile of flint corn under the window, until one night Heron felt around in the shadowy darkness and could find only enough to ration her twice. Still the gray dawn found him dumping the last seven ears into her manger, and when he groomed her as usual his touch could not have been more loving.

Bill Heron reentered his cabin, looked around him, and realized that the time had now come when his home would pass into the hands of strangers; he could leave all but—— "I can't take Mother's cheer. They don't like folks to bring furniture to the—almshouse," he murmured, so, laying the chair with the leather string still across the arms over the uncovered embers, he watched the flames leap up the blackened chimney throat for the last time. When the blaze died down the coals of the white oak splints lay like scattered red rose petals among the ashes.

Swinging his gun from the antlers, he bundled his horn in the blue yarn counterpane, his mother's last bit of weaving. With fingers that trembled with age but not from indecision, he tied the bundle to the barrel of his gun, took up his burden, closed the cabin door—and the last Heron left the nest.

Passing the Grist farm, Old Bill saw a little girl in the yard. He called, and the child came running, for they were fast friends. Counting out a handful of chinquapins into her outstretched palms, he said as he started on:

"Ye may tell yer paw that I'm gone, Tiny."

"Whar is yer goin', Uncle Bill?" questioned the child, munching.

"He will know," he answered, passing on.

The next day, being the second Thursday in January, was cattle sale day in the little village five miles from Heron's Nest, and twenty-five miles from anywhere. Two mountaineers paused in the surge of buyers, bellowing cattle, and farmers in riding clothes and high boots, remarking as a splendid strawberry mare was led off: "Well, I'll be jumped up if that ain't old Bill Heron's Red Bird! I'd 'a' thought he'd sooner sell his immortal soul."

"Goodness knows I would n't 'a' blamed him ef he had, souls being delicate articles, liable to loss and spiled by spots, an' that thar horse is a horse an' a half."

"Who were she knocked down ter, Sprouse?" asked the first speaker to a man passing, "and what's the figger?"

"New folks—Yankees, I spec'. Live out yander towards Chestnut Ridge. What fer? Two hundred an' a half."

A week of rainy and lowering weather set in, so Amos James put off bringing Heron into town to get his permit from the board of commissioners to become an inmate of the almshouse. But when the next Thursday dawned bright and warm, they started on their five-mile drive in the new green Thornhill wagon, at about the same time when Mrs. Huntingdon's coachman was ordered to bring round the pair, the new strawberry roan being considered a beautiful cross match for the cream-colored gelding they had brought with them from the North. The coachman had warranted the mare to be "gentle and kind as a kitchen cat, ma'am, though jest about as restless."

Mrs. Huntingdon had made a superhuman effort at economy, and now had only one man on the box—Richard, a reliable white whom she had brought from their Northern home. He was both coachman and butler, while the stable work was done by Jake and Nelse, two dusky citizens of Virginia.

On behind her fine carriage as it came out of the gate with its fast team jingling their brass-mounted harness, rattled the poorhouse wagon, but it was soon left far in the rear. Amos tried to lead Bill Heron on to explain how he had lost out, but with ill-success; until at last he began ramblingly, of his own accord.

"Ye see, Paw was consid'ably crippled after the war—an' the niggers was all gone. He sold off the land piece by piece as the other chilluns was married or went away and wanted their sheer. But I ain't got no complaint to make, 'ceptin' of myself."

"Yes," put in Amos; "ye war left twenty acres."

"Yes, an' a diffunt man would 'a' h'isted a livin' outen it. But Ma was plumb sick fer sev'al years. Then after she died, old Bird,

our mare, look like she jest natu'ally tuck an' give out. I hated ter plough her—she'd turn round in the furrow and look at me so reproachful-like—an' in the spring, when her colt come, she jest natu'ally laid down an' died. That's huccome I to raise Red Bird on the bottle. Right thar on the hearth I kept her, whar I could git up in the night an' heat her milk, jest like a baby. She was a good baby, too"—the man laughed softly—"never cried none at night, nur did she hev to be walked up an' down the floor, as some parents say their chilluns does."

He fell silent for awhile, then resumed as if the thread had never been broken, as indeed it had not been, in the huntsman's thoughts, they being all of his horse.

"But she could n't even be hitched to a plough until she was goin' on three year old. Even then she was coltish, an' would stop in the furrow to bite grass until I'd whistle at her, an' then she'd run clean to the edge of the field, like a bee had done stung her. I'd git to laughin' so hard I jest could n't hold the plough-handles." He laughed now as sweet and clear as a three-year child, but in the end his eyes tear-filled, and he turned away, blowing his nose to distract the listener's attention.

"Then the land had growed up in old field pines, an' had to be grubbed. When I got them cleared I found I'd left all the dogwoods. They's got such pretty gal faces in white bonnets, come springtime, that I had spared all the cream buds. Ma used to love 'em, an' I could n't abear to take up the little p'inted cedars nuther, 'cause the red birds nested in them—I jest natu'ally could n't do it. Thar they'd set on the plumb tip-top limb jest a-shakin' music outen their little throats like pourin' silver water into gold basins. I jest said, 'Go on with your hymns, little brother birds. I kin plant corn round you-all's little nestie'; but they was so blamed many of 'em, soon they did n't leave me hardly er acre of crop land."

The wagon had reached the town by this time, and Bill Heron glanced round him until in front of the little harness shop he saw a team standing. He clinched his hands, turned his face away, and began to talk wildly, to keep Amos from seeing his trouble.

Mrs. Huntingdon's coachman was in the store, seeing after some harness matters, when the red roan heard Heron's voice. She pricked up her ears to make certain, then as the wagon passed she nickered, first like a pleasant laugh, then higher and higher yet, as she received no answer. Finally, as the wagon got further along, she started—in spite of the frantic grasp on the reins by the women on the back seat. At a sweeping gallop down the crowded little main street came the victoria, the roan horse striking wheels from which the white horse whirled aside, the coachman running and shouting a dozen yards in

the rear. A man ran out from the sidewalk and caught at the bit. At this Red Bird reared, slipped on the pavement, and fell backward almost on the dashboard. Heron meanwhile had climbed over the wheel of the wagon, with which Red Bird had almost caught up, and stood beside her. Her sides were heaving, but she stood still, unscared, and he talked with her as an indulgent mother would to a spoilt child.

"Why, Lady Bird, that ain't no way fer to 'have. Why, Honey, you done skeered the nice lady what bought yer clean into the middle of next week. She did n't mean it, ma'am"—to the now hysterical Mrs. Huntingdon. "She would n't ha' hurt yer for a pretty—why, she's jest a lamb, ma'am, jest nothin' but a reg'lar lamb!"

"Richard," said the lady to her coachman, "take that red—*lamb*—home, and if I can't get a carriage at the livery, I can walk. I'd rather do so than drive a *lamb*—a Virginia lamb—again."

The red roan's misdemeanor having been thoroughly discussed at dinner the evening before with Mr. Huntingdon, she had not as yet disturbed the conversation at breakfast, when Richard stood statue-equely behind his mistress's chair, when the door behind him was suddenly flung wide, and Jake, all the whites of his eyes on deck at once, burst in.

"Boss," he gasped, "dat Red Bird is done kilt Nelse!"

Mr. Huntingdon rose and hurriedly prepared to run to the scene of action. "My God!" he breathed. "What an awful thing!"

Mrs. Huntingdon, with white face, and almost fainting, remained in her chair, but with the ruling passion of womanhood she found strength to say impressively, "Charles, I told you so."

Richard, the imperturbable, who had already learned to know darkies well even in his brief acquaintance, inquired of the negro calmly:

"Did she eat him, too?"

"Naw, suh, she ain't et him when I comed away, 'case he had done clum a tree. You know dat little 'simmon tree, Boss, at de aidge er de lot?"

"I thought you told me," said Mr. Huntingdon sternly, "that the horse had killed your brother."

"Yessir, dat's what I did tolt you, Boss. He went todes her wid de curry-comb, en—en—she come todes him wid teef an' toe-nail——"

"But if she killed him, how did he climb the tree?"

"I ain't done said he clum no tree, is I, Boss? I don' rightly know whe'r he *clum* de 'simmon or not. I seen him in de stall, an' den when I look agin he wuz up in de tree. I wuz alookin' right at him, but I ain't seen him go up hit—I jest seen him *be* up hit. Fer aught I know, he mought 'a' been borned up hit. Any way, he look mighty natu'al up dyar."

The stable-yard had been gained before the end of the conversation, and there stood the persimmon tree, swaying beneath its unusual crop of dark-skinned fruit, while underneath the red horse blew steam from her distended nostrils as she tried to paw up her native land. Seeing reinforcements arriving, however, she gave one triumphant whinny, tossed her mane to the morning breeze, and showed them a clean pair of heels over a five-barred fence.

"Go after her with a halter, Jake. She's gone straight back to the mountains."

"Dat's what she done done, Boss," remarked Jake reflectively. "But I don't know whar is no halter, so you'll jest have to 'scuse me."

"Nelse," said the master to the now descended inhabitant of the persimmon tree, "you are not afraid of her?"

"Naw, suh, I p'intedly ain't 'fraid er no horse what walks on de top side of de yuth. I done tole you dat, Boss, when you hi'ed me—but I 'bleeged fer to go home dis mawnin'. Mammy she done sent fur me to come right aways; she wants me fer to kill we-all's hawg."

So Richard on foot, and his master on the white horse, searched the cuntry, through mud and mire, in fields and over hills, all the long day. At last, as the sun was drooping towards the West, they made inquiries of a "po' white" man who said:

"A red roan, yer say? Do she answer to the name of Red Bird?"

"Occasionally," said Mr. Huntingdon.

"Why, naw, I have n't sawn her—an' I have n't sawn anybody what have sawn her. But she b'longed to ole man Heron—he's at the alms-house. S'posin' you ask there."

Old man Heron was on the porch in the fading sunlight.

"No, suh, she ain't been here—she did n't rightly know my whereabouts—but she's likely gone back to Heron's Nest."

"How can I get there? I've a great idea of leaving the beast. I can't manage her at all, and my wife goes into hysterics at the mention of my driving her again. Would you go with us and get her for us?"

The old man thought a moment. "I don't reckon I'll have to go after her. I kin call her."

He went inside, coming back with his horn. He stood in the golden sunlight, and for the first time since leaving he looked up at Heron's Nest. Then once more the old huntsman laid his horn to his lips. The setting sun burnished the silver heron's wing that ornamented its side as the crags gave back the first notes in sad sweet echoes, then, far above, in a mockery of elfin laughter from the topmost peaks.

The old man waited a few minutes, but heard nothing. Again he raised his horn, and, despite the dying sun, he blew his bird song to the dawn. Then far up the mountain-side his trained ear caught the sound of some rocks falling.

"She's hearn me," said Heron simply. He sat down, waiting. Soon through the trees they saw the red horse advancing. She stopped at the poorhouse clearing, and then the huntsman cooed to her in a whistle. She flung up her head, her mane floating free from her arched neck, and with long, straight strides she came nickering up and put her trembling nose down in the old man's hand. The groom approached with the halter, but her heels flew out at him like a piece of well-oiled machinery, and she was gone.

By now Amos James and his wife had come out on the little porch, and Huntingdon turned to him.

"Do you happen to know anybody that wants a red roan horse, sixteen hands high, sound as a dollar and"—turning with a smile towards Heron—"gentle as a lamb, all for fifty dollars?"

James shook his head.

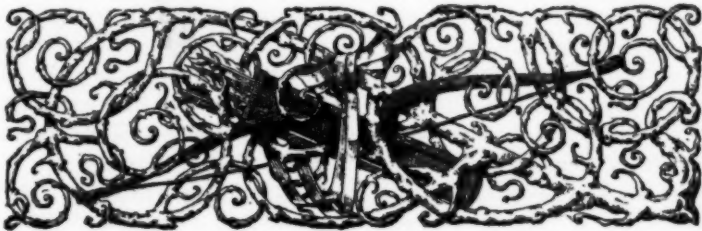
"The Board," he said, "hev wanted one, but they did n't say red roan."

"Amos Jeemes," remarked his wife, "ef ye air married to the Board, go an' live with them. But that thar horse kin plough when it ain't fox-huntin', an' I, fer one, ain't goin' to stay in these here mountains an' be bodaciously et up by the varmints because you ain't man enough to buy a horse at fifty that's dirt cheap at a hundred."

Bill Heron's heart trembled in the balance until around the page of a woman's querulous talk he saw the wide white margin of protective motherhood; when she came to her patently trumped-up fear of foxes, he felt the horse was his, he looked away and smiled as he understood that an Eternal Fatherhood had given the wife of Amos James the care of the paupers, that her otherwise wasted motherhood might build a wall about the weak.

Finally Amos answered sheepishly, "I'll take her."

"Well," said Huntingdon dryly, "I just wanted to know. I thought if I could make fifty dollars out of horse-trading in Virginia, I could perhaps afford to buy my wife a red roan automobile—*without local attachments.*"



THE FASHIONING OF FLORENCE ISABEL

By E. Ayrton Zangwill

Author of "Empire-Builders," etc.

"BLESSED if she don't think the paivement's 'er long-lost feather bed!"

"Wot d'yer call yersilf, a Siame twin or a blooming four-legged beer-barrel?"

These remarks came from a crowd of small boys who were following an ill-defined, staggering shape along the street. As I came nearer, the creature resolved itself into a stunted girl who was propping up an absorbing bulk of tipsy womanhood. The girl's hands were too full for her to do more than scowl at her tormentors, but, meeting my pitying glance, she whispered hurriedly:

"Keep Mother stiddy a minute, will yer kindly, Miss? I'll teach 'em 'ow to treat a laidy;" and, giving the drunken woman a happy lurch against a lamp-post, she turned and fell on the harassing band.

There was a sudden shriek of "'Ere comes Florence Isabel!" and a wild stampede, all the boys disappearing round the corner except one little urchin, who had fallen and lay in the mud howling dismally. I wondered if the girl would vent her rage on him, but she contented herself with jerking him to his feet and shaking him vigorously; then she returned beaming to her task. And that was my first meeting with Florence Isabel.

About three months later I was in need of a general servant. The first day my advertisement appeared, while I was still at breakfast, I heard, to my surprise, that there was a young person waiting to see me—"a most peculiar young person," added my severe domestic with evident disapproval. So I went into the hall, and there stood Florence Isabel! She certainly did look rather peculiar, for she wore a plush cloak of a strange fashion, and a skirt of her mother's, which trailed all round, while her white straw hat with lilies and red feathers looked a trifle airy for February. But in whatever guise she had come, her first remark showed me that she had come to stay.

"Oh, Miss," she began reproachfully, "I wondered 'ow long you

was goin' to put up with thet gell you got from the registry. Yis, our basement mends your boots, Miss, so ever since thet day we met, I've a-been keeping a look-out." And I, who have long since discovered the futility of fighting the inevitable, reluctantly fell in with her arrangements.

The first few weeks passed with a certain amount of friction, for Florence Isabel had many things to learn, and so perhaps had I. I almost think that I learned the more. For instance, I had never guessed why all small "generals" go home on two consecutive days once a fortnight instead of taking the usual weekly evening out, and it was not until I noticed the lank lines assumed by Florence Isabel's figure in the hours elapsing between these visits that I suddenly became conscious of the difficulties attending the washing of underwear that is simplified down to unity. Neither did I know before that in Florence Isabel's rank of life the other handkerchief is sacred for Sunday use, while stockings are thrown away at the end of the week, a new pair being bought for three-pence three farthings—if you speak of darning them you are not understood, and your language merely considered doubtful. I was hardly even aware of the gross breach of etiquette in being seen without "curlers" before tea, only comparable with attending a levee in undress or appearing décolletée at a matinée.

On one other point, I learned that Florence Isabel's ideas were fixed, and that was the necessity of spending an hour every Saturday night in the Harrow Road, forming one of the noisy crowd under the flaring naphtha jets. "It kind er sots me up," she told me. It was then that she bought her pair of cheap stockings and her weekly penn'orth of literature, which took the form of three soiled novelettes.

"I allus picks out 'igh-class murderly ones," she said. "You can tell 'em by the picters on the cover. Choose 'em that's a bit stirrin': a countess with 'er 'air 'angin' down, an' not finished dressin', an' a lord a-standin' by with a pistol an' a mustache, or somethink after thet style. They can be deceiving, though, at times. Onct I got six for a penny, thinkin' to 'ave a bargain, an' the picters all they should be, but there were n't scarcely a corpse to the lot. They might as well 'ave been tracts. But them 'tective ones is allus prime. 'Bob the Blood'ound,' 'e's the one for yer money."

But in spite of this weekly excitement, as Easter drew near, Florence Isabel began to grow restless. I wondered whether she were ill, when one day she suddenly broke out:

"Oh, Miss, let me 'ave the day off Monday, Miss, an' sleep 'ome thet night! Oh, Miss, it's Benk 'Oliday. I'll work twice as 'ard, Miss, I will indeed, an' git everythink straight an' come back early after. Oh, Miss, you means ter be kind, but it seems as if I must git away for a bit. Everythink's so smooth an' comfor'able, it makes me want ter

scream. Oh, Miss, don't say no, Miss!" And I, recognizing the malignity of Bank Holiday fever, unwillingly consented.

True to her word, early the next morning Florence Isabel reappeared. She was radiant, and began at once to give me an account.

"Oh, Miss, you should 'ave been there. We 'ad next to no sleep all night, for the third floor got drunk, an' Mother an' me 'ad to 'elp 'em up, an' then they begun to fight, an' the laidy throwed a frying-pan at 'er 'usband, while I 'eld the baiby. An' every one were so jolly, an' Mother she gets a bit fresh, too, an' started singing an' carrying on like anythink. But it's nice to see you agin, too, Miss."

In spite of all this, I bore with Florence Isabel, for her honesty was unimpeachable, and her work satisfactory save for an undue partiality for cleaning the bath-room. It was provoking to have waited expectantly for dinner, and then to find the kitchen cold and dark and Florence Isabel in the bath-room polishing the taps in an ecstatic trance. Visitors, also, were disconcerted at seeing Florence Isabel's head emerge from the cupboard on the stairs and watch them with a wondering gaze as they made their way to and from their baths. One day I asked her casually if she would like a hot bath herself. She turned quite red and her eyes filled. "Oh, Miss," she said brokenly, "sich things ain't for the likes o' me!" I was almost afraid that the reality could not come up to her expectations, and asked her later with some misgiving whether she had enjoyed it. She hesitated, then softly answered, "Oh, Miss, it sorter made me feel good all over. It were jist 'eavenly, like to green fields."

But though Florence Isabel took kindly to soap and water, the washing of her clothes still remained a difficulty, for she viewed additions to her wardrobe in the light of an extravagance, and after buying her weekly stockings, sweets, and penny shockers, she handed the rest of her half crown over to her mother. In vain I pleaded and threatened, until one day she saw me opening a big dress basket. "Oh, Miss," she cried, "that's a nice kind of box for keeping bits of things like." So, acting on the suggestion, I gave her a modest tin trunk, and she forthwith bought clothes to fill it.

Indeed, her enthusiasm carried her to the opposite extreme, and after her purchase of three knitted shawls, at a reduced rate, as being filling at the price, I spoke to her seriously about putting something by for a rainy day. The next evening she came home with a new possession, a two-and-sixpenny umbrella, with a gold and ivory handle. "I thought I'd best git it good, Miss," she explained. "As you sez, it's cheapest in the end. But it seems a lot, don't it, the money you'd give for near a 'undred 'Eartsease Romances'?"

Bank Holiday was chosen for the umbrella's debut, but, to Florence Isabel's chagrin, the day for once was fine. In vain I sympathetically

suggested that there might be other possible occasions for sailing along under its full expanse. Florence Isabel only shook her head incredulously. "Oh, Miss, d' you really think so?" she said tearfully.

She had again asked leave to spend the night at home, but the next morning she reappeared even earlier than before, and visibly depressed. I asked anxiously after the umbrella, and then wondered if perhaps her mother were ill, but she reassured me on both these points. That evening she came to close the shutters very early, and as she was going remarked shamefacedly, "I don't think I'll stop the night at 'ome any more, Miss. There's such a noise I can't sleep, an' it seems to git a bit close, too. Mother don't keep the place as tidy as she used, some'ow."

I think it was about this time that Florence Isabel took to fashioning her Sunday attire on the model of mine. The style was a little old for her, but I think it was I who suffered the more, for Florence Isabel possessed twice my looks as well as half my years. However, I bore it uncomplainingly and rejuvenated my toilettes, although my friends grumbled at the frivolity of my new summer hat, ignorant of how well its counterpart would become Florence Isabel.

It was to this hat that I attributed the final subjection of the baker's boy, a stolid youth whom I had long looked upon as an unimportant link connecting the baking of the loaf with its appearance on my breakfast table. When, however, he took to calling for orders five times a day, one was forced to accept him as a human entity. "'Is mem'ry's very short, 'e says, pore feller," so explained Florence Isabel, while I mused on the similarity in possibilities between an area-step and a ball-room stair.

However, the baker's boy went away, and I once more breathed freely. But though his memory was short, he remembered Florence Isabel. And he came back to her after two years, just when my friends were beginning to class her as a perfect treasure. Only, he was no longer called a baker's boy, but was spoken of with pride as "'Enery, my young man." He even contemplated marriage, this very ridiculous baker's boy, but, as Florence Isabel said, there was time enough to think of that, an' they'd best get to know something of each other's fam'lies first.

This led to an expedition to see 'Enery's married sister at St. Alban's, for his parents were dead. I never heard much about the visit, but it was not a success, for Florence Isabel came home in a state of silent gloom, and her only remark was to the effect "that she never could a-bear people with not an 'air out of place, an' mats beneath everything." She even refused to see 'Enery until her next Sunday out, when she had arranged to take him to call upon her mother.

As the day approached, Florence Isabel grew more cheerful. She had taken some money out of the bank, she confided to me, "So that

mother can 'ave things a bit nice against we come, an' every one knows she can be quite the laidy when so she likes." And when Sunday arrived they started out quite cheerfully.

About an hour passed, and then I heard some one moving in the basement, so I went down to see what had brought them home so early. But 'Enery was not there, only Florence Isabel was sobbing heart-brokenly in the scullery. "It's all over," she said. "'Enery's seen my 'ome an' my mother. I've run off an' left 'im there—that 'e might enjoy it proper. There's 'is sister where one can eat off the floor. 'Is fam'ly's respectable, not drunkards an' beggars, like mother an' me."

And as she stopped a sudden memory flashed before me, and I saw again that staggering, ill-defined shape coming down the street on the day that I had first made acquaintance with Florence Isabel. And then I remembered the sum removed from the savings bank with such thoughtless care, and its alcoholic possibilities. And so before my eyes rose up a vision of a drink-sodden woman meeting 'Enery's slow and painful gaze, and of Florence Isabel's despairing flight from the dirty room. But because I saw all this, I was powerless to comfort her.

In the evening, weary of waiting for supper, I went down again. And there in the firelit gloom I saw two dim forms. And then the coals broke into a sudden blaze. Florence Isabel's face was hidden from me, but 'Enery's smile of solid content was very good to see.

So I crept away upstairs. And presently Florence Isabel came in with jingling supper tray, for her hands trembled. And her cheeks were red, while her eyes shone strangely.

"'Enery thinks," she began, "that p'r'aps we could 'elp Mother in 'er trouble if we was to try together. Oh, Miss"—and she knelt beside me—"it seems as if I was 'appier than I could bear. It seems as if no girl 'ad 'ad two people so good to 'er as you—an' 'Enery."

"O YOUTH WITH BLOSSOMS LADEN"

BY ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH

O YOUTH with blossoms laden,
Hast not a rose for Age,
A bit of bloom to brighten
A lonely pilgrimage?

O Youth with song and laughter,
Go not so lightly by.
Have pity—and remember
How soon thy roses die!

THE CHRISTMAS BOOK

By Edwin L. Sabin

Author of "When You Were a Boy," etc.

IN the house of Memory is a sacred room, the latch-string of which is always hanging out. And yet the room is not for every one; it reminds me of the sensitive plant: let anybody invade it callously, at the first unsympathetic step upon the threshold it shrinks and closes fast. It is not for such.

In the room are our dearest treasures, which from time to time we love to touch and regard, as suits our mood: boyhood's doughnut jar, childhood's sweetheart, a smile, a familiar expression long unvoiced, an old flower-garden, a moonlight night, a song, a waltz rhythm, the sea, the mountains, Mother, Father, one June day—a heterogeneous assortment like the assortment in a mother's drawer of odds and ends saved, 't is scarce known why, but subtly appealing. Thus is treasured up *our* assortment, in that sacred, secret room. The majority of us disclose it shyly, tentatively. But when occasionally is found, oftentimes quite by accident, a kindred spirit who appreciates such a hoard, and who has, therefore, a hoard of his own, ah, what a bond we feel!

And amidst this assortment is the Christmas book. If to you, scornful reader, the phrase in its singularity awakens no responsive throb—if in the three words *you* recognize no magic qualities, no "Open, sesame," to your sacred room—then you had best not waste your time further in trying to get satisfaction or enlightenment by perusal of this little treatise. But with those kin of mine, brothers and sisters who gladly acknowledge the claims of a common, endearing retrospection, I would chat for a moment of the Christmas Book.

In the days of the Christmas book (our Christmas book, gentle audience), Christmas books were reckoned one by one, not, as now, by the half-dozen and the dozen. It came upon the Sunday-school tree, from "teacher," or upon the home tree or in the home stocking, with inscription of Uncle, Aunt, Father, Mother. And it would be counted insignificant enough, I fear, arraigned to show cause and exposed in the bold white light of To-day. Its gold might seem tawdry, outshone by the tinsel.

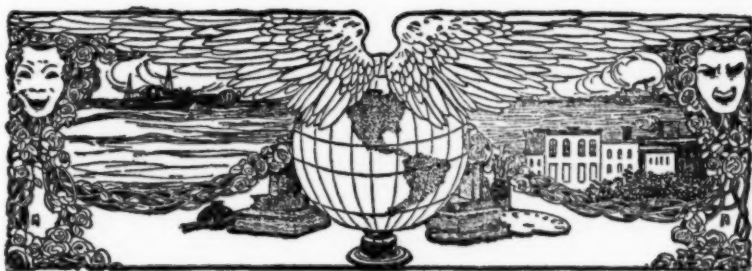
"Snow-White and Rose-Red" (or was it "Rose-Red and Snow-White"?)—this was one "the Christmas book." A marvellous set of fairy-tales. Do you recall it? Or perchance a volume of the Grimme—

or a "Children of the Frontier"—or a "Rollo" book—or another "Elsie book"—or a "Robinson Crusoe," or a "Swiss Family Robinson," or a "Green Mountain Boys," or a "Little Women," or an "Under the Lilacs," or—but if now your eye is kindling, if you smile, then do I know that a title is rushing to *your* lips, and that we are mutually certain, one of the other; and like old cronies over a pot of tea or a tankard of cider we may cluster closer and are fairly launched into confidences. The little room will hold and welcome us all.

The Christmas book would not attract attention, from the eager mercurial throng, beside the Christmas books of the present: so lavish are they in their regalia, so unhesitant in their assertions. No artist is too high for expending his best upon their covers and pages, and the cunning of man and of machinery is strained to the utmost. The wonders of the universe, of science, and of nature, are put into fable; the greatest story-tellers are employed. In its wealth of text and picture the Christmas book for the child surpasses the book for the adult. Proportions have been reversed. But in our loving ken, yours and mine, cronies all, still there remains, supreme, our "the Christmas book."

The covers were grotesquely gaudy—or, more likely, the covers were plain. "Snow-White and Rose-Red" (was it "Rose-Red and Snow-White"?) had, I believe, the "illuminated" covers; whereas "Children of the Frontier" was severely dark-blue. "Snow-White and Rose-Red" (is this title put wrong-end first?) boasted of a lithographed frontispiece (a master-stroke, that); "Children of the Frontier" possessed but a rude stereotype. And we adored them equally; we even adored "Rollo" (and bless my heart, what a prosy, didactic style, I admit, was that of kindly Jacob Abbott!). Each was a book; that rare Aladdin's lamp: a book—Christmas concession, to be unwrapped, gloated over, peeped into, read again and yet again, taken to bed with us. And never, out of the myriad Christmas books of To-day, will arrive to us, or to our surfeited children, a book the peer.

By great fortune do you, or I, some time, delving among the cast-aside and half-forgotten, back in the old home, discover a dusty, stained, faded, ragged, and dog-eared volume, the name of which must be deciphered, but which, once it is deciphered, leads instantly to an identical name upon an immortal scroll in the little room. Ah, a find! See, it is yours! "To Mary, from Auntie Kate." "To Johnnie, from his old Uncle Frank." Yes, indeed, this is it. Yield to its spell, readily—that spell which it, like an ancient beau or belle, bravely exhales; handle it lovingly; wrap it up tenderly; lay it away. Sneer not at it; take no stock of its plainness, nor of its shabbiness, save to breathe a benison upon them. For this is the Christmas book—that magical Christmas book which once upon a time came to *you*; now preserved by lavender, interlined by love.



WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

WHY NOT?

THE recent decisions of the Supreme Court, the Presidential vetoes, and the constant quashing of statutes as unconstitutional by the courts, lend force to the suggestion made by a distinguished member of the Bar that there ought to be a Commission on Statutory Interpretation, to pass on all public bills before they are enacted into law.

At present our law-making is not only cumbersome, but unscientific. The number of bills introduced into our legislatures is appalling. Their range is bewildering, and their proposals run the whole gamut of reform.

They are initiated by every sort of legislative crank, put into legal form by law clerks, amended past recognition, and either buried in committee pigeonholes or sent to a bewildered Executive to sign or veto while you wait.

It is no wonder that the Courts kill or nullify so much of our legislation. While they do so often upon purely legislative and technical grounds, yet there is a vast amount of reason for their attitude in the matter.

Our law-makers are not all trained lawyers. They have no skill in law-making, and are at the mercy of the legal lobby which watches all reform legislation with a keenness born of self-protection. Hence so many "snakes" that creep into bills in committee and hibernate there until the courts smoke them out, all too late to do any good.

A non-partisan, half-legal, half-lay Commission on Statutory Interpretation would be a protection to real reform. It would get rid of

possible ambiguities in the language of proposed legislative enactments, would interpret fairly the intention of their framers, and forecast their probable results when submitted to the acid test of actual enforcement.

The Commission could scotch, if not kill, much useless and vicious legislation; partially clarify and codify current legislation; remove much of it from partizan contention; probably make legislative law more respected than it is at present; and save the judiciary from the necessity of delivering such judgments as make the recall a dark shadow on their otherwise peaceful horizon.

FREDERIC B. HODGINS

THE AMERICAN SOLDIER AND THE AMERICAN SAILOR

AT this writing the American soldier and the American sailor have retired from concentration and police duty, and have returned to barrack, port, and cruise, and the wonted manœuvres of peaceful days. They know a heap more than they did, and the world knows a heap more than it did; they think more of themselves, and the world, ignoring captious critics, thinks more of them.

Let alone the rapidity or the slowness with which the mobilization on land and sea was effected; let alone the completeness or the incompleteness of the proper equipment; let alone the efficiency or the inefficiency of the United States army and navy organization: the American soldier and the American sailor were *there*, and they were "on the job."

A great change has taken place, even since 1898, in the quality of the "common" soldier of the army of the United States, and of the "common" sailor of the navy of the United States. It was my privilege to witness, at close quarters, a brigade of infantry in camp, a half-dozen companies of marines in camp, and a half-dozen crews at anchor; and, more than that, by the thousand they were turned loose in town. I want to say that, taken by and large, the American soldier or sailor in peace as in war seems to me a personage of whom the citizen need not be ashamed.

Mens sana in corpore sano—the wholesome mind in the healthy body—is more the régime of army and navy than ever before; and when one surveys these rangy, well set-up American soldiers, the less rangy, less precise, but always bronze-throated and clear-eyed American sailors, one realizes that, after all, the old flag is safe, and that its sleepless color-guard is the pick of a world.

It is to be doubted whether ever was or will be a more formidable fighting machine than the Army of the Potomac or the Army of Virginia in its prime; whether ever was or will be a stauncher aggregation than the crew of the *Constitution*, the *Hartford*, the *Kearsarge*. But times are advanced, weapons are advanced, standard of men is advanced, and personnel, if not advanced (courage is courage, throughout all the centuries), is different.

Many more pains are being taken with the fighting man as an individual—with his morals and his teeth, with his clothes and his mind. For all such is indefinitely connected to make the best fighting man of peace and of war. It renders possible and practicable the turning loose in a town of forty thousand citizens, at one time, two thousand sailors on twenty-four-hour shore-leave, and soldiers in like number and like leave. Nothing happened!

The American soldier and the American sailor are clean, at least outside—and this personal cleanliness covers a multitude of sins as well as expurgates a few. A man cannot police his body externally without policing it to an appreciable extent internally. The man with his teeth attended to for him and by him, his body neatly clothed and his feet neatly shod, his skin shaven and bathed, his shoulders broadened and his waist lengthened not artificially but naturally, his reading and his religion encouraged, is a better fighting man, on call, and a better representative of government at home and abroad, than ever was the grenadier of powdered pigtail but filthy habits, or the tarry sea-dog who by custom wallowed out a shore-leave in a gin-shop.

Not every American soldier or American sailor is a paragon; ever and anon he lapses into a throw-back and a lusher, whom no rigid treatment can change, no leniency condone. But so lapses the scholar and the mechanic. This, however, is true—as the events of 1911 should have indicated to the thoughtful and open-minded onlooker: In the file as in the rank, before the mainmast as aft the mainmast, the American soldier and the American sailor are a credit to any nation. Give them their due.

EDWIN L. SABIN

POISE AS AN ASSET

“**P**OISE.” Everywhere one hears the word, but how few have ever glimpsed its maximum possibilities! With it, the world may be ours. Without it, we are the world’s. Every hour man needs it; woman, every moment.

It saves incredible situations, penetrates *impasses*, and sends calamity a-sprint. It governs the bodily carriage, steadies purpose, and inducee

sleep. It generates confidence, flashes magnetism, and italicizes personality. It silences the tongue, lifts the head, and levels the glance. Its possessor, though money-poor, is rich, for in his Treasure House there is time, hope, and humor a-plenty to share with others. The poised man begins every task in time; he starts on the moment, for a given point; he walks briskly, neither rushing nor dawdling, and arrives neither too soon nor too late; never breathless, rarely perturbed.

Poise as a business asset can scarcely be measured. The chief who holds his employees also holds himself. The salesman who neither boasts nor cringes, the man who presents his argument crisply and convincingly, disdaining clap-trap and superlatives, is the man whose salary is increased yearly, whose customers "come over."

A professional man, a physician, *par exemple*, becomes successful and affluent in direct proportion to his self-reliance. To master not only their tongues, but their faces, great surgeons and physicians learn early, and incidentally are unjustly accused of cold-heartedness by the superficial. The self-mastered neither borrows trouble nor countenances morbidity.

In a man's social life, poise is the hall-mark of what our forebears used quaintly to call "gentility." The poised man is not necessarily a great man, but a great man is necessarily a man of poise. He has the inestimable gift of concentration. His associates are chosen with characteristic care. He differentiates sharply between friends and intimates; of the latter he may have one in a life-time. His calm invading regard saves him from the babbler, and from the trousered barnacle whose attachments foil repose. Dignity is easily counterfeited for a time. A fool may masquerade as a man of poise, but the first east wind tears his silken garment to shreds and patches. Poor fool!

Without poise, a woman is as sadly hampered. An impulsive, hot-tempered girl becomes in time an improvident, self-centred, or shrewish woman. Every girl should realize that self-control has direct results. The blushing woman no longer adorns a pedestal. The idiosyncrasies of circulation may force the same carmine into shameless cheeks.

The utilitarian sequence of keeping oneself in hand is constantly realized. It fortifies the soul in anguish: it keeps cobwebs from the mind, illusions from the brain, and the heart loyal.

Perhaps of all the good things that come through poise to women, the best is an immunity from "nerves." It is not impossible for a nervous mother to cast a gloom over the most buoyant brood, and send her husband away with a "hungry heart" indeed.

In wedlock, perhaps, woman finds her serenity of spirit most often in danger. Without it she has but a fighting chance for happiness. With herself well in hand, she is richly dowered with opportunity, and thrice equipped as a help-meet.

Mental surety divorced from egotism is equally reactive. The influence of one self-contained woman in a coterie of nerve-racked intimates is semi-beatific. Her quiet arrival, unheralded by the fripperies, is as that of an evangel of peace.

Although the poised woman is, as a rule, blessed with warm, all-embracing intelligence, fond of things that spell progress, that trend toward culture, she is singularly free from "crazes." She is musical, not mad over musical people; she loves good pictures, enjoys good plays and books, but lest she develop the fixed idea—an obsession—she inevitably divides her leisure and varies her pleasures, thus keeping her balance of poise intact. Our Lady of Calm has the "emergency mind," that depends upon its own cells for remedial supplies. Her concessions to man's point of view is part of her charm, and none more ready than she to "broaden" her mind or to pay tribute to individuality.

In brief, successfully to cope with life at its straining points, both men and women must have self-control. They need it to steady themselves, and to dominate others. Once acquired, it rarely is lost, hence, as one who is told of available treasure eagerly seeks it, so should those who desire all that is contributory to the best hasten to acquire this admirable and practicable quality.

MINNA THOMAS ANTRIM

PATTI'S ANSWER

ADELINA PATTI, who at the age of seventy-one is to sing in London again and even is expected to make another American tour, always was the highest paid singer in the world. To this day no one has been able to obtain anything like her honorarium, which was four thousand dollars a night, and upon her last tour of this country the present writer paid the diva five thousand dollars a night to sing two songs, with one encore for each. In addition, Patti received a large allowance for herself and suite, and was granted a private car for her exclusive use while on tour.

On the evening of November 9, 1904, Patti sang in Philadelphia to an audience representing thirteen thousand eight hundred dollars, and although her voice was but a shadow of its former quality, thousands of women stood in line for hours seeking the privilege of standing room. It is worthy of record that on this evening Patti got for her share eight thousand one hundred and fifty dollars; for besides five thousand dollars a night, the diva was given fifty per cent. of the gross receipts in excess of seven thousand five hundred dollars on each concert. This is more than double her own record previously, and stands to-day as by far the largest sum ever paid to any singer in the world's history.

Patti was ever the shrewdest stage celebrity of her day. In all her career no impresario has ever been able to impose on her, and she would remain in her dressing-room until the necessary four thousand dollars in cash (Patti tabooed checks) was in her hand.

Once the old-time minstrel magnate, Colonel Haverly, had the ambition to become an impresario. He called on Patti at her hotel in New York, sent in his card, and was graciously received.

"Madame," said Haverly, "I should like to secure you for a tour of this country, if we can arrange terms."

"For concert or for opera?" asked the diva.

"For concert," Haverly responded.

"Well, for how many nights do you want me?" Patti asked.

"Sixty, at least."

"I will sing for you for sixty nights for two hundred and forty thousand dollars and the usual allowance for expenses—one-half of this amount to be deposited with the Rothschilds on the signing of agreements," was Patti's ultimatum.

Haverly was regarded as an intrepid showman in his time, but the diva's terms and independence fairly feazed him.

"But, my dear madame," he said, "that is nearly five times as much as we pay our President for an entire year."

"Well," said Patti, "why do you not engage the President to sing for you?"

Haverly fled.

ROBERT GRAU

THERE IS A QUIET ROAD

BY CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

THERE is a quiet road
Worn smooth by pilgrim feet,
And over it tall tender trees
Make shadows where they meet.

We leave the world behind
When on that road we fare;
Scent of the rose in summer lanes
And goodly friends are there.

And over hills of dusk
And through a lonely way
The Road of Sleep leads all of us
Who weary of the day.

THE WHISTLE

By George L. Knapp

Author of "The Scales of Justice," etc.

HE picked it up from the frayed grass of the menagerie tent, just in front of the giraffes, and carried it to the open air for a clearer view. It was a slender, ivory thing, two inches long, and covered with that microscopic carving which only the patience of the Orient can achieve. The hunchbacked dog-trainer of the greatest travelling show on earth was no connoisseur in such matters; but he knew enough to make him wonder how such a thing got to such a place. Those sailors from the battleship might have lost it; but how did they ever come to have it? By the mouth-piece, it was a whistle; but Sanchetti did not care to put it to his lips until it had seen a bath.

"What you got now, Humpie?" demanded a voice of sneering banter behind him.

"Hush, Dick!" came instantly after in a woman's tones, tones of remonstrance, indeed, but not unmixed with a warmer feeling. Sanchetti answered icily:

"I have manners, at least. What else—I do not know."

He turned and looked up at the woman; then higher still to the face of her big escort. There was all the difference between loving and loathing in the two glances. He held out the ivory thing, and the woman took it.

"How queer!" she exclaimed. "Looks like a whistle, does n't it?" Sanchetti nodded.

"What's the use of guessin' about things when you can make sure?" said the big man contemptuously; and set the unwashed thing to his lips. Sanchetti looked away in disgust; then started in surprise.

"What was that?" he exclaimed.

"Pedro making music," returned the big leopard-tamer, as a flat, coughing, grating scream came from the menagerie tent; a scream which all recognized as the voice of the big jaguar, pride and terror of the circus. "This thing's broken," he added, handing back the whistle. "Won't make a sound."

"It was n't the jaguar." Sanchetti's voice was puzzled, and he dropped the whistle into his pocket without looking at it. The big beast-tamer spoke with an aggressive swagger:

"Then it was one of your own pipe-dreams, and you have 'em pretty often. Say, the old fellow was ugly to-day."

"He is always ugly," said Sanchetti abruptly.

The leopard-tamer swaggered again, shaking the yellow mop of hair which belied his Spanish ring-name of "Lopez."

"Well, he suits me all right. You can have all the sloppy poodles you want, that'll lick your hand when you cuff 'em. I like something with some ginger to it."

"Hush, Dick," said the woman again. "The dogs did beautifully to-day, Padre."

"Thank you, Madonna," replied Sanchetti.

He stood watching her as she moved away. On the bill-boards, she was Madame Ziska, the famous equestrienne. On the contracts, she was Maggie McCartney. But to Sanchetti, from the day he first saw her ride round the ring standing on her father's shoulders, she was Madonna. She had been his little Madonna, his loved Madonna; and now—the look she turned on Lopez was proof enough that she was his lost Madonna. And lost to a man whom Sanchetti could neither trust nor tolerate; a man whose apparent good humor changed on the slightest provocation to truculent bullying; a Goth, Sanchetti swore to himself, a Goth, as uncivilized as his ancestors of a dozen centuries ago. He could and did dominate an arena filled by fourteen leopards and the huge jaguar; but he remained a barbarian still.

The show was making a series of those one-day stops which try even the iron bodies and seasoned nerves of a circus troupe. Perhaps it was this irritation which fanned the hostility between Lopez and Sanchetti. Perhaps that hostility needed no fanning. However that might be, Lopez baited the dog-trainer incessantly. He had divined, though he could not appreciate, Sanchetti's keen sense of beauty, and keen sensitiveness to his own deformity. Lopez made it his business to give Sanchetti daily reminders of that deformity. One of the biggest and ugliest dromedaries of the show was named Aladdin. Lopez transferred the name to Sanchetti, varying it with the plainer term of "Humpie," and expounding the resemblance between animal and man. The boss was never near when these sallies of wit were in progress. Madame Ziska sometimes was; but though she checked Lopez in his brutalities, the manner of the checking brought small comfort to the dog-trainer.

"You are cat and dog, you two," she said wearily one day, when, after receiving a sharper rebuke than usual, Lopez had left them.

"Which is the faithful animal, Madonna?" asked Sanchetti.

"If you are going to insult my friends, I won't stay here," declared Madame Ziska, and left.

That night the circus stopped for a week's engagement. Sanchetti

engaged a room near the show-grounds. The next morning, he appeared with his favorite collie at his heels. Lopez was lying in wait for him.

"Hello, Humpie!" called Lopez. "I want to hire you and your pups for a special engagement."

"I have enough engagements," answered Sanchetti, flushing.

"Oh, but this is extra special," persisted Lopez, grinning broadly, and winking at the laborers near by. "I want you to bring them curs to perform at my wedding. Maggie likes 'em; and you know a man can't refuse his girl anything when he's just engaged to be married."

"It is n't true!" exclaimed Sanchetti. Lopez came nearer with a belligerent swing.

"Look here, Hump! There's a lot of healthier jobs than calling me a liar, see? Me and Maggie McCartney's going to be married; and you can chew on that till it gets sweet to you!"

"You're not fit for her!" cried the dog-trainer.

"Not fit? Well, I guess I'm as fit as a humpbacked dog artist of a Dago! You're a fine one to be talking about who's fit for a woman, ain't you? Yah!"

Sanchetti stood silent. Lopez cast about in his mind for some fresh insult, and recalled the coarse prairie story at the expense of a round-shouldered man. He grinned again.

"Hey, Aladdin!" he called. "Your head and shoulders had a law-suit one day. They called your belly up for a witness, and he's on the stand yet!" He touched the pitiful hump between the shoulders, and laughed; and the laborers near guffawed loudly.

Sanchetti turned away, grinding his teeth in the helpless rage which wears men's hearts out. The collie rose to follow. Lopez deliberately gave the dog a kick.

The trainer whirled at the yelp. He was carrying his whip, a heavy, imposing thing, whereof his pets knew no more than the sound. The lash cut twice across Lopez' face; and then, shifting his grip, Sanchetti sprang forward and struck with the butt. The blow fell fair, but it was useless. Sanchetti felt his wrist gripped in a clasp of steel, his arm seemed twisted from its socket, a brutal short-arm blow smashed into his face; and then he was held by the throat while the lash of his own whip curled over his back and legs. He heard a snarl as the collie came into the quarrel; and then, all at once, the grip on this throat relaxed. He found himself sitting on the grass. A few feet away sat Lopez, holding his hand to his ear. Between them stood the manager.

"Get up and go about your business," the manager was saying. "This will cost you ten days' pay. Any more of it will cost you your job and keep you from getting another. Shut up and go!"

Lopez judged it wise to obey. To attack the boss would be to get himself mauled by the attendants, and discharged and blacklisted by the management. He walked away, muttering to himself that some one should pay for this. The manager turned to Sanchetti.

"Are you much hurt?" he queried gently.

"No," said Sanchetti in a queer, muffled voice. He stood up and called his collie. The manager spoke again:

"Keep out of that fellow's way, and if he bothers you, come to me. Now you'd better go take a rest."

"Thank you," answered Sanchetti, still in that muffled tone.

He walked blindly away, the collie at his heels. He shut himself in his room, turned on the light, and stared at himself in the mirror. One cheek was red and puffy, but he did not mind that. He was looking deeper. He noted the high, capable forehead; the wistful eyes; the sensitive mouth. And then he turned resolutely to catch the full deformity of his crooked spine, legacy of the tenements in "Little Italy," where he was born; and abruptly he shut off the light, and buried his face in his hands. He was not fit for his Madonna. She was straight and strong and beautiful; while he——

Sanchetti was neither morbid nor a fool. He knew that the deformed child of poverty-stricken immigrants, who has worked his way to an assured place in even the little world of the circus, has shown a moral courage far higher than the physical pluck which enables a clever brute on two legs to master a stupid brute on four. But his shrinking from deformity was too deep for reason or philosophy; a thing which scorned argument and laughed at the thought of compensation. A humpbacked dog artist! That brute of a Goth had told the truth.

The collie poked his cold nose into his master's hand, and snuggled close in that silent sympathy which the dog owns in place of speech. Sanchetti roused himself. Hearts may break, but hands must work; and it is well that they must. He bathed his face in cold water, feeling the ache of it for the first time as he did so; and opened his kit to change his rumpled clothing. As he lifted out a fresh collar, he caught sight of the whistle.

He had not thought of it since the day he found it; but now he recalled the statement of Lopez that the thing was broken. He looked it over carefully, but could find no crack. Then he carefully washed the mouth-piece, set it to his lips, and blew. And then—he stared at the thing in utter amazement, while the collie, nose toward the ceiling, was howling as if his doggish heart would break.

It was the same note he had heard when Lopez blew on the unwashed thing: a shrill, saw-edged, ear-piercing note; octaves higher than the highest tone of a flute. Compared with this, the chirp of a cicada was soft and low. He tried it again; and again the collie howled in an

anguish which Sanchetti's musicianly ear could appreciate. Then, as he started to blow a third time, a thought lit up his mind as a flash of lightning illuminates a landscape at night; and he sat down suddenly on the bed.

Lopez had blown the whistle, but Lopez had not heard it! Madame Ziska had not heard it! But he had heard it; and the collie had heard it; and what made the jaguar scream that day the whistle was first tried?

Sanchetti had never read Helmholtz nor Tyndall. He knew nothing of the physics of sound. He had never heard of that classical case of two friends climbing the Alps, when the one complained of the intolerable shrillness of the noise of the insects, and the other vowed there was no sound whatever. But he had grasped as much of this amazing riddle as really interested him. Since there were persons tone-deaf, why was it not possible that there were persons who could not hear a very high note at all? As for the jaguar, he would test that possibility without delay.

The Italian went through his two performances that day in a half-dream. Then, when the tired crowd was filing out at night, and the animals were back in their cages, Sanchetti took post in an inconspicuous corner of the menagerie tent, and blew his whistle.

There was a sharp exclamation from some one in the thick of the crowd. The big African elephant stopped rocking and stood rigid. The rumbled growl from the cat-cages ceased abruptly. The people near by took no notice. He blew again, a long, strong note. The elephant trumpeted madly, and strained at his leg-chains. The gibbons shrieked and jabbered. And the big jaguar, on whom Sanchetti's eyes were fixed, sprang against the bars of his cage and clung there, screaming a hideous din that made the spectators shiver.

"What's the matter with the brutes?" exclaimed twenty voices.

Sanchetti waited for a moment, till he had assured himself of the astounding fact that, with one exception, he was almost certainly the only human being in the tent who had heard the whistle. Then he blew a third time. The jaguar ceased clawing at the bars, dropped to the floor, glared round; and then, with a motion the eye could hardly follow, leaped for his mate and crunched her neck in a single bite.

A woman fainted. Children screamed. Men turned pale and swore, and tried to hurry their families from the tent. The keepers rushed up with clubs and iron bars. The jaguar backed to the rear of the cage, but kept his grip. Lopez came running, and would have entered the cage on the instant, but the manager held him back. When the crowd was out of the way, Pedro was lassoed, and the body of his murdered mate dragged from the cage.

Lopez took the jaguar in hand the next morning, and after a three-

hour session beat him into something which passed for submission. But he took a chair into the arena with him for the afternoon's performance. The audience saw, and counted it a new exhibition of daredevilry that a man should sit down in the presence of that spotted fiend. The circus people knew that Lopez had made his first concession to danger. A stout oak chair, held in front of one, is the best possible defense against the charge of a great cat.

"Do you think Pedro will go bad?" asked Madame Ziska fearfully as they stood to watch the leopard-taming.

"I am not his master, Madonna," was the cold reply.

"It would kill me if anything happened to—to Dick," said Madame Ziska simply.

Sanchetti gripped his whistle tighter at the words, but he did not blow.

Day after day the dog-trainer took his position to watch the leopard-taming; and always he carried his whistle. He would watch every supple move of cat and man, gloating at his undreamed mastery of both. And when Lopez, bowing and smirking, responded to the acclaim, Sanchetti would smile grimly, and know for a moment the peace of power. They did not know, these applauding thousands, Lopez did not know, the manager did not know—but the hunchbacked dog-trainer was the master of this ceremony. The arrogant beast-tamer held his life at the good pleasure of the man he had robbed and beaten and reviled; the man whom he covertly insulted almost every day. One long, shrill, ear-sawing blast on the whistle; and the crowd would have a sensation, indeed! Lopez would go down under the charge of a greater brute than himself; and the papers would chronicle the end of another man who had played with death for the pleasure of the mob.

And day after day Sanchetti turned his head and owned himself a king but of shadows, whose substance was beyond his reach. For each day, as Lopez ran lightly by to the dressing-tent, Madame Ziska would throw him a smile and a kiss as he ran.

"How does a real man look to you, Humpie?" sneered Lopez one day, at their next long stop.

"When one comes by, I will look at him and let you know," was the grave answer.

"Aladdin!"

"Thank you. Aladdin had a lamp."

"Well, what of it?"

"So have I," answered Sanchetti, turning away. Lopez looked after him, scratching a puzzled head.

"Now, what did he mean by that, I wonder," he demanded of the world in general. But the world did not reply.

That afternoon, when Sanchetti took his place to watch the work

of Lopez, he missed Madame Ziska. A moment later, he saw her, and his whole figure stiffened with fear and fury. She was in the arena with Lopez and the leopards.

When the day's performance was over, Sanchetti met the pair at the entrance to the dressing-tent.

"If you take her into that den again, I will kill you, kill you, kill you!" he cried at Lopez. The top of his head did not reach to the big man's chin; but there was something in the brown eyes which kept the threat from seeming absurd.

"What is it to you?" challenged Lopez roughly. Sanchetti seemed not to hear.

"You can herd with your jungle cats yourself, but you shall not take her!" The dog-trainer's voice rasped with menace that could not be ignored. "If your brutes eat you, good! They shall not touch her! If she goes again, I kill you!"

"There, there!" interposed Madame Ziska soothingly, laying her hand on Sanchetti's arm. "I won't go again. It was only for a lark, and the manager won't like it, any way."

"We'll see about that," snapped Lopez. The surprise of the occasion was gone, and his truculent courage roused at the thought of opposition. But Sanchetti turned away, and flung himself face downward on the grass.

Next morning, Lopez spoke to Madame Ziska about the afternoon's performance.

"But I'm not going," she said. "I promised Sanchetti I would n't." She might have added that the manager had positively forbidden her to go; but for some reason known only to herself, she withheld this unanswerable argument.

"What's Hump got to do with this?" demanded Lopez angrily.

"Sanchetti is a very old friend of mine. I've given him my word, and I must keep it."

"Do you think more of that crooked dog-walloper than you do of me?"

"Please don't call my friends bad names, Dick."

"See here, are you coming or not?"

"Not."

Lopez stormed, furious as only a dictatorial and petulant man can be when he meets an impassable barrier. Madame Ziska's eyes were wet before the controversy ended, but she held firm. And just the other side of a canvas partition, Sanchetti had heard it all.

The barrier which for weeks had held him back from vengeance was gone. Nay, to his angry vision, vengeance had become a duty. He knew that Lopez would persist in his demands; he knew that the persistence would in the end wear out the girl's objections. Sooner or

later she would go into the arena again, go regularly; and then it was but a question of time till the savage brutes tore and rended her. One man, and one only, could stop this. He clutched his whistle, and exulted.

Sanchetti got through the afternoon's performance, somehow, though hardly aware of what he was doing. The collie helped him, much as an old soldier may help his rattled young officer, till the defaulting spaniel was duly executed, and hauled away in a mimic hearse by his companions. Then, with his curving lips drawn down to a thin, straight line, and his face an olive-colored mask, the Italian returned to the big tent alone. But instead of standing, he squatted on the lowest bench; legs crossed, elbow on knee, and chin resting in the hand which held the whistle.

Lopez had never been more brilliant. He was just angry enough to call up all his powers. The brutes felt the added mastery of his bearing, and leaped with unaccustomed promptness to obey. Even Pedro sulked through his paces with more than usual alacrity. The tent shivered with applause as Lopez piled the beasts in a spotted pyramid, with the big jaguar at the apex, and himself standing unarmed below; a splendid brute tyrant of brutes, an implacable master of devils. Sanchetti waited till the tamer had stepped aside from this particularly helpless position; and then, without perceptible motion, the whistle found its way to his lips.

A dog howled, an elephant trumpeted from the menagerie tent, a sudden tension came over the barred arena. The thin, rasping sound bored through the air once more; and the jaguar put down his head and roared. Lopez struck out with his whip. There was a flash of spotted fur, a shriek from the crowded benches, and the pyramid dissolved in chaos as the leopards leaped to reach their tyrant, or turned and clawed one another. Lopez went down, fighting like a true Goth to the last, and clutching his chair as he fell. Over him raged the jaguar. The attendants sprang to the rescue, but the gang of fighting brutes blocked the doorway. And then Madame Ziska appeared at the door of the dressing-tent, stared for a second, and sped like the wind for the arena, brushing aside the scrambling mob as she ran.

"Dick!" she screamed. "Dick!"

Through the age-long minute of pandemonium, Sanchetti sat quiet as a stone, his eyes glowing like brown coals, his face flushing darkly under its olive tan. Now he sprang up and raced for the arena. "Hold her!" he shouted as he passed Ziska, struggling at the door; and dived past the mob till he was six or eight feet beyond the point where the jaguar was trying to get past the chair. Then he thrust his face against the very bars, the whistle to his lips, and blew, and blew, and blew.

A moment later the frightened spectators sank back in their seats, gasping weakly with relief. Leopards and jaguar were heaped in a spotted mass against the bars where Sanchetti had stood. The attendants were carrying Lopez from the arena; limp, bloody, but alive; and the clown was helping Sanchetti from the ground where the jaguar's paw had thrown him when it flicked through the bars. There was a red mark down his face. But he shook off the helping hand, stooped, groped for something on the earth, and then walked unsteadily to the dressing-tent. Madame Ziska was kneeling by the unconscious Lopez. The surgeon was bending over him. Questions and praise were flung at Sanchetti, but he went straight to the surgeon.

"Will he live?"

The surgeon completed his examination before he answered:

"Yes; but he will tame no more leopards."

"Good!" said Sanchetti. "He is yours, Madonna," he added. The girl's arms went round his neck as she sobbed out her thanks. Sanchetti gently disengaged her clasp.

"Some time, Madonna, you may tell him that the humpbacked dog artist had his uses. And give him this as a memento." He went out, and they heard his voice asking for the manager.

The broken ivory whistle lay in Madame Ziska's hand.

THRENODY

BY RUTH GUTHRIE HARDING

THERE'S a grass-grown road from the valley—
A winding road and steep—

That leads to the quiet hilltop, where lies your love asleep ...
While mine is lying, God knows where, a hundred fathoms deep.

I saw you kneel at a grave-side—

How still a grave can be,
Wrapt in the tender starlight, far from the moaning sea!—
But thro' all dreams and starlight, the breakers call to me.

Oh, steep is your way to Silence—

But steeper the ways I roam,
For never a road can take me beyond the wind and foam,
And never a road can reach him who lies so far from home!

A HOLE IN THE WALL

AS SEEN BY A MOUSE

By Mrs. John Kendrick Bangs

TO live in a nice little hall bedroom in a quiet little boarding-house in a big, wicked city, is not half bad—if you have an imagination; but if you haven't this blessed attribute of happiness, well, don't read what the Mouse has to say, because you won't like it at all at all. If, however, you are in possession of this most wonderful of all the necessary ingredients of the life triumphant, and have to live in a hole in the wall, then you must have days when you feel as I do—just like a bright-eyed little Mouse in a never-ending quest for something to nibble. So much like a Mouse indeed do I feel myself, that I have acquired the habit of peering out into the hall warily for my enemy the cat, before I fare forth o' mornings to my day's work.

I grant you there are days when I hate my hole in the wall, and long to stretch out like Samson of old and thrust the smothering walls asunder, even to be crushed in their downfall—not to mention the squashing of the cat. But oh, the days when I love it—love it so dearly that it hurts—this funny eight-by-eleven hole-in-the-wall of mine. Days when I return soul-weary from hours of toil in the rush and struggle for existence; from dashing madly from one side of the street to the other, dodging the autos with their arrogant and discordant "gabriels," and suffering no end of bumps from my fellow man and woman in my desire to reach my destination in something like a straight course. Days too when the pulsating city ceases to be a joyous wonder and becomes an awful echo in my throbbing temples—yes, these are the days when I love it most, and then it is that I scurry up the stairs and thrust my clumsy old brass key into the lock, and with a great sigh of relief slip softly into the protecting embrace of my little retreat. It is then that I feel that sacred, holy heart-beat that means I am *home*. Home? Even a hole-in-the-wall can be a home if it be there that you keep the treasures of your soul, and find the true tried friends of your spirit.

There are my dear old books, so well thumbed and marked; the pictures that know me so truly—pictures that quietly stand watch

over my sleep, ready to greet me joyously when I awake. Then there is my Persian rug, my one and only rug which has never ceased to thrill me with its mystic blending of colors—my chaperon, I call it, it is so old and comforting. It cost me much, that rug, but then most cherished possessions do cost. Some self-denial makes dearer the cherished object, and although I wore my ancient and unstylish suit one winter longer to pay for it, the rug has repaid me a thousand times over with the delight of puzzling out again and again its hidden meaning, wrought in dyes so beautiful, so mellow. On days like these I close my door and lock it against the cat, and thank God for all this luxury and comfort, and mean it, too.

I wonder if you have ever suffered from the onslaughts of that arch-enemy of the human kind, the grip, stealing upon you like a thief in the night, seizing you unawares, and felling you to lie prone upon your narrow cot in a hole in the wall for two long weeks? 'Tis the most wonderful experience. It is as full of sundry and divers sensations as the chestnut burr is full of prickers. It is almost too wonderful. One is apt not to be able to analyze it at first, and so realize how wonderful it really is, but if you can it is most interesting and enlightening to a sick Mouse. It is like the man coming to tune the piano. He strikes a few harsh chords on the out-of-tune keys, and it jars upon your nerves, and fills your spirit with jangling. That is the coming-home feeling, achy, weepy, and wondering what on earth is the matter with you that you should feel so out of harmony with everything, not even excepting yourself. Then Mr. Tuner begins striking with his pudgy finger one single note over and over again—tum-tum-tum—until its monotony maddens you, and you wish him with his forefathers in another world. It is then that it finally dawns upon you that you have the grip, or that the grip has you—either way makes little difference to a prostrate Mouse—and the fever begins to run high and you cry and wish the cat would come and eat you up. This stage lasts some days, and the tuner-man moves from bass to middle-register, note by note, blow by blow, tum-tum-tum.

Then come days when you think, Oh, what's the use, anyhow! And just at that point when things seem to be hopelessly tangled, and the key-board jangled beyond all hope of relief, the man at the piano suddenly stops the tum-tum-tum and strikes a few soothing chords upon the keys he has brought into harmony, soft rippling chords, and somehow things begin to slip to rights again. This is when your dear kindly Landlady, several sizes too large for your little hole in the wall, but as tender as she is overpowering, comes with some pleasing and special dainty, all your own, and likely to arouse the jealousy of the cat if he could but see it—a heavenly grape-fruit, perhaps, cold and juicy. She brushes your tousled hair, with now

and then a soft mother-pat that reaches way down into the very depths of your heart. She helps you into a sweet fresh nightie, and best of all, because you are very human for a Mouse, she tells you choice bits of gossip about the cat, and you smile once more, and it, whatever it may be, does seem some use, after all.

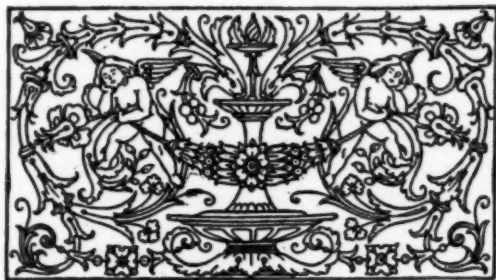
And so it goes until the morning comes when you awake free from pain, hungry for your coffee and rolls, the sun shining upon the wonderful spot of dull blue in your rug, and "God's in his Heaven, and all's right with the world." Truly the piano-tuner has finished. He plays his best parlor-trick upon the keys, not only to assure himself that the work is well done, but to show the lady of the house that he is a pianist of decided talent, and departs, leaving things the better for his coming.

Now, when I had the grip in my hole in the wall, the tuner left in ten days, but my office had given me two weeks to get back into trim again, and so, being an educated Mouse, I realized that I had four days in which to nibble cheese and be lazy. Wherefore, I made up my bed into that wonderful day disguise known as a couch, and settled myself upon it in comfort. My good old bed! My friendly couch! How true a friend it is! Such adaptability—indeed, it has adapted its surface so truly to my bumps and curves, that when dressed in its daylight finery I sometimes fear that it resembles the ragged sky-line of the Presidential Range. And there I settle to find life very sweet.

Once settled, my eyes begin to travel over my possessions, one by one. There is my Mona Lisa, and as my eyes fall upon her I smile. I always smile when my eyes meet hers, seated with folded hands, in the midst of her mediæval landscape, with that tantalizing, elusive expression of hers; her eyes teasingly holding back the secret she knows but will not tell. I have offered her everything—offered to swap my choicest bit of worldly knowledge for that secret, and she, though but a woman, is smilingly adamant and holds it close. I have even gone so far as to promise her that some day when ends meet and form a little bow I'll take the bow and buy that wonderful foxy-faced Cardinal for a wall-companion for her, but to no avail. She still eludes me. And then as my eyes wander from my well-beloved Mona, twilight falls. A mysterious darkness envelops us all. The tug-boats on the river sound their warning cry, now soft, now shrill, and as the hush of the City settles on my spirit, I rest my head back on the pillows, heaped high in the corner of my couch, and my eyes light upon another picture, hung high on the wall. It was here when I took my hole in the wall, and I left it skied, as I wanted my own much travelled and loved possessions hung where the light was at its best. But now in the twilight it seems as if a little wave of the fading

light lingered lovingly just on this spot. It is not a large picture—just a simple reproduction of some popular etching framed in a narrow cypress frame, yet it suddenly becomes my crystal ball of dreams. A little stream gliding like a silver thread off into the distance; a soft grass-grown road skirting the water's edge, winding vaguely away, to be lost to sight on the other side of two gaunt poplars. A little farm-house surrounded by gnarled apple-trees nestles at one side, and the light of the after-glow in the sky beyond the sentinel poplars shines mysteriously—that is all, until I find myself a new self, light of step, rested, and full of the peace that passeth understanding, walking up that pictured road in the hush of the after-light, and I am not alone! My hand is tucked protectingly under the arm of a big soul-understanding man, who talks and listens, and realizes my dream of true companionship. I can hear the singing of the frogs in some distant marsh, like fairy sleigh-bells, and over all lies the pungent smell of burning wood. Slowly we pass on between the poplars, over the little hill, to the land that lies beyond the narrow cypress frame.

Two weeks do pass, you know, and once more I peer out into the hall for Mr. Cat, but, finding him elsewhere engaged, I whisk off to work, work which is sweet, because I always have my hole in the wall to scurry back to, and my picture of happy dreams to step into where I know I shall meet some one I love—some one who will some day respond to my thoughts, and who will carry me off to a larger hole in the wall called a flat, maybe, but where together we can nibble cheese and work and dream.



SHORT-STORY MASTERPIECES

V. THE INSURGENT

By Ludovic Halévy

DONE INTO ENGLISH, AND WITH INTRODUCTION,
BY THE EDITOR

LUDOVIC HALÉVY AND HIS WORK

THAT there is a real distinction between a short-story in French and a French short-story, Ludovic Halévy's fictional work illustrates perfectly, for in theme, tone, and treatment it is French. More specifically still, it is Parisian. As Professor Brander Matthews observes in his discerning introduction to "Parisian Points of View," a collection of our author's stories, "Cardinal Newman once said that while Livy and Tacitus and Terence and Seneca wrote Latin, Cicero wrote Roman; so while M. Zola on the one side, and M. Georges Ohnet on the other, may write French, M. Halévy writes Parisian." His was indeed the Parisian point of view, his the sympathetic understanding of the pursuits, the temperament, the ideals, of the dwellers in the Capital of Europe.

One service above others Halévy rendered to his Paris: while so many writers have given an unfortunate though piquant character to the French short-story by depicting chiefly the *roué* and the woman of easy manners, the vulgar money-king and the broken-down noble, the complacent pander and the sordid tradesman of Paris, this writer mostly chose to depict other types. He knew the gay city as few other writers of his day knew it, yet nearly all of his little fictions may be read aloud in a mixed company. The explanation of this wholesome spirit is simple—unlike the others, Halévy had not come up from the provinces with eyes ready to pop out at the city sights. From boyhood he knew all sides of Parisian life, and saw things in correct perspective, so he did not interpret light-heartedness to be lightness, nor gayety to be abandon. All sorts and conditions of men move in his stories, but the vicious, the sensual, the mean, are no more prominent in the Paris he paints than they are in the real Paris—and that means that they exist in much the same numerical proportion as in any other metropolis.

Halévy's life does not lend itself to anecdote, for it lacked stirring events, yet his every large step had a direct bearing upon his work.

On the first day of January, 1834, he was born in Paris, of Hebrew parents. His father, Léon Halévy, had attained to some distinction as a poet, and his uncle, Fromental Halévy, was not only director of singing at the Opera, but a celebrated composer as well. Upon completing his formal education at the *lycée Louis-le-Grand*, the youth entered the civil service in the Ministry of State, in six years rose to be *chef de bureau* at the Colonial Office, and finally became editor of the publications of the Legislative Corps. In these public offices he gained that inside view of official life which is apparent in his works.

Very early Halévy began to know the theatre, for through his uncle's influence he was as a youngster of fourteen on the free-list of the principal theatres of Paris. Scarcely was he a man before he began the writing of numberless books for operas, burlesques, and dramas, the materials for which he had been gathering while meeting theatrical people of all grades. By and by some of these were published, some were acted, and at length he enjoyed a vogue. In collaboration with Henri Meilhac he wrote a number of opera books, notably "*La Belle Hélène*," "*Blue-Beard*," "*The Grand-Duchess of Gerolstein*," "*The Brigands*" (all with music by Offenbach), "*Carmen*" (founded on Mérimée's story) with music by Bizet, and "*The Little Duke*," with music by Lecocq. These bright operettas and operas are typical of that mocking and practical spirit of the Second Empire which laughed away the old ideals with a zest worthy of a nobler occupation. His heavier play, "*Frou-Frou*," though well known about a generation ago, is not so meritorious as his dramatic skits and sketches.

But Halévy's work for the stage bore heavily upon his later success, for when he left the dramatic field to give almost exclusive service to the novel and shorter fiction, he by no means forgot the training of the earlier period. Always his understanding of the people of the stage is apparent. In many a tale these folk appear, and never is the hand that leads them forward ungentle, even when the words of the introducer are tinged with irony.

As for form, it is not especially in his plot-structure that we see traces of Halévy's training in the drama, for he seldom emphasizes plot at all. But when he does depart from his favorite sketch form to essay the short-story, he still writes simply; and so inevitably do the incidents succeed one another that there scarcely seems to be even a plot. Halévy's early apprenticeship to the drama is most clearly seen, however, in his precision of outline, clear characterization, sense of dramatic values, unerring climax, and suppression of needless details.

Halévy took an active part in the Franco-Prussian War, vivid impressions of which he has given us in "*Notes and Memories*" and "*The Invasion*"—volumes which are half chronicle, half story-telling, and wholly delightful. After the catastrophe of Sedan, his fictional work,

dealing with theatrical folk, began to appear. "Madame Cardinal" (1870), "Monsieur Cardinal" (1871), "The Little Cardinals" (1880), and "Criquette" (1883), are not really novels, but connected stories and sketches, giving a panorama of people and affairs theatrical. Halévy has drawn no more vivid characters than the Cardinals, father and mother, with their comedy anxiety as to the immoralities of their young ballet-dancing daughters, Pauline and Virginie, whose love affairs are portrayed with gayety and comical reality. The little Criquette is an actress who makes her *début* at the Theatre Porte-Sainte-Martin. About this interesting central figure flit a score of perfect types of player-folk—clown, provincial manager, ardent young actor, the demi-mondaine actress, authors, chorus girls, and all the rest. "Criquette" is Halévy's longest tale, and shows the sketch-artist and *raconteur* at his best.

But American readers doubtless know Ludovic Halévy most affectionately by his "Abbé Constantin," which has gone through more than one hundred and fifty editions in French, besides numberless printings in other lands. In its first year of issue, 1882, at least thirty-five editions were required to meet the demand. It is a novelette in length, and a simple short-story in plot. Charming, ingenuous, idyllic, popular with all classes, it is a refreshing breath from rural France. The large estate of Longueval, comprising the castle and its dependencies, two fine farms and a forest, is announced for sale at auction. The Abbé Constantin, a warm-hearted, genial, self-sacrificing priest, quite the typical Abbé of romance—"a Curé, neither young, nor gloomy, nor stern; a Curé with white hair, and looking kind and gentle"—has been for three decades the village priest. He is disconsolate at the thought that all his associations must be broken up, and is all the more distressed when he hears that an American millionaire has bought the property. Lieutenant Jean Renaud, his godson, the orphaned son of the Abbé's old friend, the village doctor, is about to sit down at meat with the old priest when two ladies arrive—the wife of the millionaire purchaser of Longueval, Mrs. Scott, and her sister, Miss Bettina Percival. How these bright and fascinating women win the heart of the benevolent priest, and adapt themselves to their new surroundings, and how Lieutenant Jean and Miss Bettina find their happiness, furnish the incidents for this crystal little romance.

"A Marriage for Love" (1881) is the most popular of Halévy's longer short-stories. A young French officer marries a well-bred and ingenuous girl. Soon each discovers that the other has kept a diary from childhood. Thinking that the declarations of love which she sees written in her husband's journal refer to some other woman, the young wife cries out, but is consoled by his protests, and it is agreed that they shall read aloud passages from their own diaries, turn about. With all the naïveté which it seems the special province of English eighteenth-

century and French nineteenth-century writers to depict, these young people disclose in this fashion the birth and growth of their mutual love. A simple story enough, yet refreshing in the midst of so many Gallic records of marital infidelity.

Of Halévy's shorter stories several stand out in particular. "Princess" tells with admirable directness how "the bourgeois heroine . . . contrives to escape the lawyers . . . and marry a real prince." "A Grand Marriage" is the equally uncomplicated narrative of how the betrothal of an alert young Parisienne is arranged by her parents, with the clever and worldly-wise assistance of the prospective bride.

"The Most Beautiful Woman in Paris" is more a study than a story, yet the firmly wrought, breezy narrative style of the author is here at its best. The story runs that a social connoisseur, Prince Agénor, upon seeing at the Opera the wife of a lawyer, pronounces her to be the most beautiful woman in Paris. Then ensue flattering newspaper notices, the inflamed ambition of the advertised beauty, costly gowns, a new coupé—all that madame may appear fittingly at a social function at which it is announced that she is to appear, as well as the Prince. Madame does appear, but she is neglected because the Prince forgets to come to make her acquaintance—he has already found another "most beautiful woman in Paris." The author's narration is lively, as always, and his social observation confident and minute, while his characteristic playful irony is second only to that of another unique story, "The Chinese Ambassador."

In this we have as a *motif* the unsettled political conditions existing at the close of the Franco-Prussian War. The story is told with delightful humor, in diary form, by a Chinese Ambassador Extraordinary who has been sent to France and England with rich presents to placate the French and English governments, and also to arrange official reparation for the massacre of some foreign residents in China. Then follow a series of confusions. There is no longer an Emperor in France, there are three rival French Republics, and another *coup d'état* seems imminent. So the Ambassador, not knowing whom to approach, keeps the presents, and waits. Soon he goes to England, where he meets the Queen. She accepts the apologies as well as the presents, but in conversation with some French women at a social function in London he finds that there are three claimants to the French throne, Napoleon III., the Duke of Orleans, and the Count of Paris—all in exile—to say nothing of the three rival presidents, Gambetta, Thiers, and Favre. He is again much in doubt as to which to approach with his mission, as he receives such contrary advice from all quarters. Upon his return to Paris, however, he finds the government has again changed its capitol, and that a seventh government is in the ascendancy—the Commune. When he learns that Paris is burning, he concludes that it is "a dead, destroyed,

and annihilated city." In two weeks, however, order is restored, and the Ambassador decides that it is still the most beautiful city in Europe, and the most brilliant, for the Republic of M. Thiers is now undisputed. To him he delivers his mission.

"The Story of a Ball Dress" is couched in an old form—the ball dress tells its own story; but we have a kaleidoscopic picture of the change of affairs before, during, and after the war—that war which plays so large a part in the writings of both Daudet and Halévy.

"The Insurgent," first published in 1872, follows, in translation. It is without doubt Ludovic Halévy's most intense and dramatic short-story, yet none is more simply told. In it the writer actually becomes the Insurgent, and so vigorous, so sympathetic, is the portraiture that every word comes sincerely and naturally from the soul of the speaker. Halévy does not speak as such a one would—he is The Insurgent—life, breath, and word. It is a miracle of compression—not the compression of conscious literary art, but the tense, naïve, open brevity of one who has no embroideries for his words, no masks for his sentiment, no apologies for his acts, but goes, as with the cleavage of an axe, straight to the heart of what he means. Yet with all of this brusque, speedy simplicity, abrupt, halting and rudely frank in style, there is a note of poignant pathos at the close that leaves the eye misty and the heart warm.

In no one of Halévy's stories do we see so clearly the application of his robust, sincere literary creed as confessed in his own words:

"We must not write simply for the refined, the blasé, and the squeamish. We must write for that man who goes there on the street with his nose in his newspaper and his umbrella under his arm. We must write for that fat, breathless woman whom I see from my window, as she climbs painfully into the Odéon omnibus. We must write courageously for the *bourgeois*, if it were only to try to refine them, to make them less *bourgeois*. And if I dared, I should say that we must write even for fools."

THE INSURGENT

(L'INSURGÉ)

"PRISONER," said the president of the court-martial, "have you anything to add in your defense?"

"Yes, my colonel," responded the accused; "you have given me a little advocate who has defended me according to his idea. I want to defend myself according to my own.

"My name is Martin—Louis Joseph; I am fifty-five years old. My father was a locksmith. He had a little shop in the upper part of the Faubourg St. Martin and did a small business. We just about lived.

I learned to read in *Le National*, which was, I believe, the paper of Monsieur Thiers.

"The 27th of July, 1830, my father went out early in the morning. That evening at ten o'clock they brought him back to us dying on a litter. He had received a bullet in the chest. By his side upon the litter was his musket.

"'Take it,' he said to me; 'I give it to you, and every time there is to be an insurrection, be against the government—always! always! always!'

"An hour afterward he was dead. I went out in the night. At the first barricade I stopped and offered myself. A man examined me by the light of a lantern. 'A child!' he cried. I was not yet fifteen. I was very small, quite undersized. I answered: 'A child, that's possible; but my father was killed about two hours ago. He gave me his musket. Teach me how to use it.'

"Starting with that moment, I became what I have been always, for forty years: an insurgent! If I fought during the Commune, it was neither from compulsion nor for the thirty *sous*, it was from taste, from pleasure, from habit, from routine.

"In 1830, I bore myself rather bravely at the attack on the Louvre. That gamin who—the first—climbed the iron fence under the bullets of the Swiss—that was I. I received the medal of July; but the *bourgeoisie* gave us a king. Everything had to be done over again. I joined a secret society, I learned to mould bullets, to make powder. In short, I completed my education—and I waited.

"I had to wait nearly two years. The 5th of June, 1832, at mid-day, before the Madeleine, I began by unhitching one of the horses from the hearse of General Lamarque. I passed the day shouting, 'Vive Lafayette!' and the night in making barricades. The next morning we were attacked by the soldiers. That afternoon towards four o'clock we were pocketed, cannonaded, fired upon with grape-shot, crushed, in the Church of St. Méry. I had a bullet and three bayonet thrusts in my body when I was picked up by the soldiers on the flag-stones of a little chapel on the right—the chapel of St. John. I used often to return to that little chapel—not to pray, I was not brought up in those ideas—but to see the trace of my blood which is still marked upon the stones.

"Because of my youth, I got only ten years in prison. I was sent to Mont-Saint-Michel. That was why I did not take any part in the uprisings of 1834. If I had been free, I should have been fighting in the Rue Transnonain as I had fought in the Rue St. Méry. Against the government—always!—always!—always! That was the last word of my father, that was my gospel, my religion! I called that my catechism in six words. I got out of prison in 1842 and again I began to wait.

"The revolution of '48 made itself—without help. The *bourgeoisie* were stupid and cowardly. They were neither for us nor against us.

The City Guards alone defended themselves. We had a little trouble in capturing the post of the Château-d'Eau. The evening of the 24th of February I stayed three or four hours on the Place de l'Hôtel-de-Ville. The members of the Provisional Government one after another made speeches to us, said to us that we were 'heroes,' 'noble citizens,' 'the first people of the world'; that we had shaken off the yoke of tyranny. After having regaled us with these fine words, they gave us a republic which was n't any better than the monarchy which we had tumbled to the ground.

"In June I took up my musket again—but that time things were not successful. I was arrested, condemned, sent to Cayenne. It seems that out there I behaved myself well. One day I saved a captain of marines who was drowning. They thought that very fine. Notice that I would very cheerfully have shot at that captain—if he had been on one side of a barricade and I on the other; but a man who is drowning, who is dying—— In short, I received my pardon. I got back to France in 1852, after the *Coup d'État*. I had missed the insurrection of 1851.

"At Cayenne I had made a friend, a tailor named Bernard. Six months after my departure for France, Bernard died. I went to see his widow. She was in destitution. I married her. We had a son in 1854. You will understand all in good time why I speak of my wife and of my son. Only, you ought already to suspect that an insurgent who marries the widow of an insurgent does not have royalist children.

"Under the Empire, nothing was going on. The police held a firm grip. We were dispersed, disarmed. I worked, I brought up my son in the ideas that my father had given me. The wait was long—Roche-fort, Gambetta, public reunions; all those things put us in motion again.

"On the first serious occasion I showed myself. I was of that little band that assaulted the barracks of the firemen of Villette. Only, there a stupid thing was done. They killed a fireman, unnecessarily. I was taken, thrown into prison, but the government of the Fourth of September set us free—from which I concluded that we had done quite right in attacking that barracks and in killing that fireman, even unnecessarily.

"The siege commenced. At once I was against the government, and for the Commune. I marched against the Hôtel-de-Ville on the 31st of October and the 22d of January. I loved revolt for the sake of revolt. An insurgent, I told you at the start, I am an insurgent. I cannot see a club without joining it, an insurrection without running after it, a barricade without bringing my paving-stone to it. That goes with my blood.

"And then, besides, I was n't altogether ignorant, and I said to myself: 'We only need to succeed some day, clear to the foundations, and

then in our turn we shall be the government and things will go a little better than with all these lawyers who get behind us during the battle, and who pass ahead of us after the victory.'

"The 18th of March came, and naturally I was in it. I cried 'Hurrah for the military!' I fraternized with the soldiers. I went to the Hôtel-de-Ville. I found there a government at work—absolutely as on the 24th of February.

"Now you tell me that that insurrection was not legitimate. That's possible, but I don't quite see why. I begin to be muddled, I do, between these insurrections which are a duty and those insurrections which are a crime! I do not clearly see the difference.

"I fired on the Versailles troops in 1871, as I fired on the Royal Guards in 1830, and on the City Guards in 1848. After 1830 I received the medal of July. After 1848, the compliments of Monsieur de Lamartine. This time, I'm going to have transportation or death.

"There are some insurrections that please you. You raise columns to them, you give their names to streets, you distribute among yourselves the offices, the promotions, the big salaries; and we others, who made the revolution, you call us—noble citizens, heroes, a nation of brave men, etc., etc. It is with such money that we are paid.

"And then, there are some other insurrections that displease you. As a result of those, you distribute to us exile, transportation, death. Well, see here: if you had n't paid us so many compliments after the first, perhaps we would not have done the last. If you had not raised the column of July at the entrance to our quarter, perhaps we should not have gone to demolish the Vendôme Column in your quarter. Those two penny-trumpets were not in harmony. The one had to discord with the other, and that is what came about.

"Now, I am going to tell you why I threw away my captain's uniform at the street corner on the 26th of May, why I was in a blouse when I was arrested. When I learned that these gentlemen of the Commune, instead of coming to fire with us upon the barricades, were distributing thousand-franc notes to themselves at the Hôtel-de-Ville, shaving their beards, dyeing their hair, and going to hide themselves in caves, I did n't wish to keep the shoulder-straps they had given me.

"Besides, they embarrassed me, those shoulder-straps. 'Captain Martin,' that was silly. 'Insurgent Martin,' quite as it should be. I wanted to end as I had begun, to die as my father had died, an insurrectionist in an insurrection, a barricader in a barricade.

"I could n't get myself killed. I got taken. I belong to you. Only, I wish you would do me one favor. I have a son, a child of seventeen, he is at Cherbourg, on the hulks. He has fought, it is true, and he will not deny it; but it was I who put the musket in his hand, it was I who

told him that his duty was there. He listened to me. He obeyed me. That alone is his crime. Do not condemn him too harshly.

"As for me, you have hold of me—do not let me go; that's the advice I give you. I'm too old to mend, and, besides, what would you have? Nothing can change what is: I was born on the wrong side of the barricade."



LOVE IS PASSING

BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES

LOVE is passing through the street.
 Love, imperishably sweet,
 On his silver-sandaled feet
 Draweth near.

Suppliant he came of yore,—
 Comes he now a conqueror?
 Will he, pausing at my door,
 Enter here?

Once his lips were ruby-red,
 And his wings like gold, outspread,
 And the roses crowned his head,
 As in story;

And, though these he now disguise,
 Ever a lost paradise
 In the azure of his eyes
 Keeps its glory. . . .

Love is passing through the street—
 Love, imperishably sweet,
 And were death our way to meet,
 I would dare it.

Come he suppliant, as before,
 Come he as a conqueror,—
 So he turn not from my door,
 I can bear it!

CHRISTMAS EVE AT SEDECAKE HALL

By J. J. Bell

Author of "Wee MacGregor," etc.

CHAPTER ONE

LORD SEDECAKE sprinkled some triple extract of eucalyptus on a clean handkerchief, and turned to his wife, who was rather hurriedly selecting a tiara from her famed collection, while she deftly dusted her countenance with face powder.

"If I were you, my dear, I should not powder my nose," he said quietly.

"If I were you, my dear, I should!" she retorted, smiling.

"I can't help having a cold," he said with gentle dignity, "I hunted too long on Monday."

"You mean you sat too long in the ditch," she returned, with a ripple of laughter.

Lord Sedecake laughed also. "You are irresistible, Cornucopia," he said affectionately. "I can't believe you are really forty-two. I'll wager that nobody would take you for more than thirty-eight or——"

"Hush, flatterer!" cried her ladyship gaily, throwing the puff at him and knocking his eye-glasses into the well-filled wash-basin.

"Thirty-nine at the outside," said his lordship, as he recovered his glasses.

"Don't put them on damp, or they'll make your cold worse, Henry," she remarked tenderly, for she was not always frivolous.

Presently Lord Sedecake looked at his watch. After some little mental calculation, he said seriously: "It is five minutes past seven, or thereabouts, Cornucopia. Our guests will soon be here. Shall we descend to the pink drawing-room?"

"Oh, we must receive our guests in the Hall to-night, Henry, as we always do on Christmas Eve."

Lord Sedecake's face fell.

"Not without the Yule Log," he replied. "We must positively give up dealing with those stores, my dear," he added in a determined tone.

"They promised faithfully to let us have it in good time," said her ladyship, sighing. "Perhaps it will come yet."

"Well," said his lordship a little pettishly, "I have no more time to bandy legs—I mean, words. Let us descend."

They descended.

CHAPTER TWO

THE host and the hostess stood before the great fireplace in the Hall.

"This fire smokes horribly," his lordship moodily observed.

"It's this damp, muggy weather," replied her ladyship. She was growing depressed. "Perhaps, after all, we had better receive in the pink——"

The aged butler, followed by a footman and a handmaid, appeared.

"The Yule Log has come, my lord," said the aged butler. "Fourpence to pay."

"What impertinence!" exclaimed Lady Sedecake. "The man in the stores promised to pay freight."

"Never mind," said his lordship loftily, drawing from his pocket a sovereign-purse of gold, set with brilliants. "Tell the messenger to keep the change. It's Yule-tide." He handed the butler a sixpence. "And now bring in the Yule Log!"

A minute later it was in his hands. He removed the twine and paper.

"I'll get some sugar," cried Lady Sedecake blithely. "We're out of fire-lighters."

"This is more like Christmas," said his lordship, as several flames began to lick the Yule Log. "A puff with the bellows will make it positively blaze."

"Should I put this card on the mantelpiece?" inquired her ladyship. "It was packed with the Log."

"Yes. It will be safer."

The card bore these words in bold red letters:

DO NOT POKE THE YULE LOG,
AND IT WILL LAST FOR YEARS.

"Wonderful thing, asbestos," said Lord Sedecake.

"I wish I had got the larger size at two-and-eleven," said his wife, turning away and quitting the hall to interview the cook.

CHAPTER THREE

HIS lordship rang for the butler.

"Have you opened the wine, Peters?"

The old man shook his head. "We've all had a try, my lord, but we can't shift the cork. I've sent for the joiner; he'll bore it out."

"Good! I knew I could depend on you, Peters." Lord Sedecake laid a kindly hand on the aged servitor's shoulder. "You have n't been butler all these years for nothing, Peters."

"Not exactly for nothin'," said the old man, removing a tear from

his right eye. "Not exactly for nothin'," he repeated, as he tottered away. "But bloomin' near it," he muttered on reaching the pantry.

"Faithful old soul!" reflected the master. "I would n't insult him by offering him more wages. I shall give him a cigar to-morrow."

CHAPTER FOUR

LORD SEDECAKE was coaxing the fire with vestas when his wife entered.

"Henry, the Wassail Bowl is broken."

"Who broke it?"

"Cook says it broke itself. She says it fell off the shelf when she was n't looking."

Angry words rose to his lordship's lips, for the bowl was an heirloom that he had but recently purchased. But he checked the torrent of wrath at its outburst.

"Cornucopia," he said quietly, "let us remember that we still have our Yule Log."

"Henry, you're a duck! It—it was I who broke the Wassail Bowl!"

CHAPTER FIVE

"HENRY," said her ladyship, a few minutes later, "I want you to speak seriously to James."

"What has he been doing?"

"Summon him and see!"

His Lordship rang, and the footman presented himself. A glance at him was sufficient.

"James," said Lord Sedecake with unwonted sternness, "go at once and adjust your calves. They are unneighborly. Do not let this occur again."

The man retired, scowling.

"Is that some one knocking?" said her ladyship, listening intently.

"Only James's knees," replied her husband. "This eucalyptus does n't seem very strong. I think I'll send Peters to the cellar for a fresh bottle."

"Are n't you standing in a draught, Henry?"

"Well, I believe there is a draught here. Seems to be coming down the chimney."

CHAPTER SIX

"OUR guests at last!" said Lady Sedecake, putting her hands to her tiara. "Thank goodness, the fire is going better! The Yule Log is getting quite red! I wish James would be quick."

The door-bell rang sixteen times, and then the footman made his appearance.

"I could n't come without my stockings, my lord," he said calmly.

"Er—no, of course not," his master admitted. "Open the door at once, and apologize immediately you do so, explaining that the electric bells are not working this evening. Be smart now!"

James stepped across the hall and opened the door.

"The electric bells are not working this evening," he said politely.

"Liar! I heard 'em!" was the reply.

James closed the door, and returned to his master.

"Evening paper, my lord," he said, presenting the same.

"You may go, James," said Lady Sedecake haughtily. She turned to her husband. "You might have known, Henry, that our friends would not arrive except in automobiles. Wait till you hear a motor before you give James any more foolish orders."

"But you thought our guests were at the door, Cornucopia."

"I did n't. However, it can't be helped. What is the time now?"

"Quarter to eight, or thereabouts."

"Dear me! I'm afraid our friends must have come over something."

CHAPTER SEVEN

LORD SEDECAKE made a calculation on his cuff with a gold, ruby-topped pencil.

"I find I made an error of thirty-five minutes in the time, Cornucopia," he said at last. "It is now only seven-fifteen, so that our guests are not late, after all."

Her ladyship replied at some length.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE guests were punctual. Some arrived in motors, some in cabs; two came in goloshes, and one in a bad temper.

High-class greetings having been exchanged and costly wraps removed, the company of thirty souls gathered round the Yule Log to await the announcement of dinner.

"Might I beg you to stand back and let it get a little air?" said the host presently.

"I would suggest a drop of brandy," remarked the guest who had come in a bad temper.

Lady Sedecake clenched her delicate hands as she mentally decided that one guest at least would not get any breast off the fowl.

The great folding-doors of the dining-room were thrown open.

"Soup!" cried the butler.

In a moment the hall was deserted. Lady Sedecake always insisted on her pea-soup being made with a ham-bone.

CHAPTER NINE

HALF-AN-HOUR later, the last toast having been eaten, the merry party trooped into the ball-room.

"Let our Christmas revels begin!" cried the host, tossing a woollen ball into the midst of the throng.

The revels having begun, he slipped away from the brilliant scene to get a fresh handkerchief and to see how the Yule Log was getting on.

In the hall he halted, transfixed with horror, the cotton square forgotten. The Yule Log had disappeared! Falling on his knees, the distracted nobleman groped among the embers; he even looked in the ashpan. Could it have been spirited away? He remembered that a guest had said "Brandy."

A cry of rage and grief broke from him. The guests came running from the ball-room with consternation and perspiration on their faces.

"The Yule Log has been stolen!"

Lady Sedecake, half-fainting, clung to the hat-rack.

"Ring for the servants!" she gasped.

The servants were rung for. They gathered in the hall—all except one.

"Where is James, the footman?"

A hairpin was distinctly heard to drop.

CHAPTER TEN

THE aged butler stepped forward, and removed a tear from his left eye.

"Speak!" thundered Lord Sedecake in a trembling whisper.

"J-J-J-James——" began the old man.

"There's only one 'J' in James," put in the guest who had come in a bad temper.

"If you want to know where your footman is," he continued, ignoring the murmurs of indignation around him, "he is, I believe, sitting at the kitchen fire."

"What is he doing there?" cried Lady Sedecake, drawing herself to her full height, and waving a hat-peg above her tiara, on which the woollen ball had somehow got impaled.

"Well," said the guest calmly, "I fancy he is obeying a suggestion I made to him a little time ago. He is, in short, trying to warm the Yule Log."



SAFE INVESTMENTS

Edward Sherwood Meade, Ph.D.

IN the field of security investments the buyer should seek information on three points: (1) Shall I purchase stocks or bonds? (2) From whom shall I purchase my securities? (3) Into what industries shall I concentrate my investment buying?

The first question was answered in last month's article. We have now to take up the second question: From whom shall I purchase my bonds? The security business, in its organization, resembles any other business. There are the manufacturers, the companies which issue the bonds; the distributors—investment bankers, investment or finance companies, or savings-bank and insurance companies, which purchase bonds from the producers, and, directly or indirectly, place them in the hands of the consumer, the investor, the policy-holder, or the proprietors of savings-bank accounts. In the field of merchandise there are some producers who deal directly with the consumer, but these are the exceptions. Generally speaking, the producers of shoes, hats, groceries, and dry-goods have found it economical, and in all other ways satisfactory, to deal with the wholesaler. The jobber will buy in round lots from the manufacturer, taking his entire season's output of a certain line, assuring him his money without risk or trouble of collection, and enabling him to make his financial and technical plans on a basis of assured receipts.

It is even more important and advantageous for the maker of bonds, the borrowing company, to deal with the bond jobber, the investment banker. The investment banker is, in most cases, a partnership. If of the first rank, the concern will have a large capital, and a credit with banks and trust companies several times the amount of its capital. The investment banker will also have associations with other houses of the same kind, which will place at his disposal very large sums of cash whenever he requires. The business of the investment banker is the purchase and sale of securities. He sometimes adds to this other functions similar to those performed by a commercial bank, such as receiving deposits, subject to check, and the purchase and sale of bills of foreign exchange. His main business is, however, dealing in investment securities.

The investment banker, the jobber of bonds, organizes his business on the lines of a hardware or a dry-goods jobber. He has in his files

the names of a large number, sometimes many thousands, of present, prospective, or potential customers. He knows about how much money each one has to invest and the approximate date when his money is available. He has an organization of salesmen who visit these customers, impressing upon them the merits of the securities offered by their house. The work of the salesman is supplemented by letters, circulars, and public advertising. Some of the large houses extend their operations to foreign countries, and can draw, on occasion, upon the investment resources of France, Holland, England, and Germany. The investment banker sells largely to institutions, insurance companies, trust companies, even government banks. His patrons include nearly every man and woman who has \$500 or \$1,000 of money for the purchase of securities.

These security jobbers stand ready to purchase the bonds, and sometimes the stocks, of corporations for cash. The prices which they offer the corporation are, of course, below the prices which they expect to receive—five points on some bonds, ten points on others. Out of the difference they pay their expenses and make their profit. It is nearly always advantageous for both the security producer, the corporation, and the security consumer, the investor, to deal with the security jobber.

To the corporation, the advantages of dealing with the investment banker are evident. To begin with, when the contract with the banker is signed, the cost to the corporation of obtaining the money which it requires is determined. The bonds may be sold at 85, 87½, or 95. No matter what the price, the exact cost of the money is known. This money will be paid over to the corporation either at definite dates or on demand. Contracts can, therefore, be made for the supply of cars, or locomotives, or bridge material, with absolute certainty that the money to pay the bills will be in hand.

The cost to the corporation of selling securities direct to investment jobbers is usually much less than the cost by the alternative method, direct sale to the investor, and the certainty of return is far greater. The banker has a permanent organization and an established clientele of customers. The organization is constantly at work marketing bonds, and the customers are steadily buying. Most of the older houses control the security trade of a large part of their clientele, who will buy from no one else. The investment banker can count on a certain amount of money from these customers at regular intervals. It is not necessary for the banker to force its bonds on an unwilling or unready market. By utilizing their credit, the bankers can borrow usually up to eighty per cent. of the cost of these securities which they have purchased. An established banking house can also employ the method of trading in a new issue for an old. Their regular customers, those upon whom the bankers can rely to buy their quota of any new issue, may be loaded down with bonds. Their resources may be exhausted. They have old bonds

with an established record of interest payments, so-called "seasoned" bonds, which are readily salable in the general market or to particular customers. The bonds of the new issue are exchanged for the "seasoned" bonds on terms which show a profit to the holder. For example, he is allowed to buy a \$1,000 bond which would cost him \$950 in cash for \$900 in old bonds. The old bonds, thus acquired by the bankers, can be sold perhaps for 97, although they might have difficulty in selling the new bonds at 95.

Finally, the investment banker has the great advantage of associations in the same line of trade. Unlike the merchandise jobber, he has developed to a high degree the methods of coöperative buying. When a new issue of bonds is to be purchased, he can quickly form a syndicate containing perhaps twenty other houses, located in all parts of the country, and by this operation he has placed at his disposal twenty selling organizations and groups of investors in addition to his own.

Sharply contrasted with the superior advantages of the investment banker as a distributor of securities, is the situation of the corporation which tries to do this work for itself. A corporation engaged in the mining of coal or the operation of an electric railway does not possess any of the elaborate equipment necessary for the sale of large amounts of securities on short notice. Since its demands for new capital are occasional, dependent upon its need for growth and larger facilities, a company may run along for five or six years without selling any securities. There would be no occupation for a securities-selling department under these circumstances. Any company, even a strong corporation, desiring to sell bonds outside the circle of its own stockholders at very low figures, must construct a special organization for the purpose and at the time. Such an organization is expensive and inefficient. The company must rely on newspaper advertising to discover its prospective customers, and this is a very expensive method.

Again, most companies would have difficulty in borrowing from banks on the security of their own bonds, although this security might be entirely satisfactory when offered by the investment banker. The cost of selling, and the proceeds of sale, under these conditions, would be equally uncertain. The corporation could not launch upon any extensive building programme, relying upon so precarious a source to meet its contract obligations.

So important and so plain are the advantages of selling bonds to bankers instead of attempting to reach the investor direct, that the method of direct appeal is adopted only when necessity constrains. The manufacturer of shoes may decide to do without the jobber, and may establish his own chain of stores through which he may market his product direct. The wisdom of this method is doubtful as a general practice, but in a few cases it has undoubtedly succeeded. The shoe-

manufacturer, however, is making shoes all the time. His factory runs continuously, if he can sell its output. His business is to manufacture and to sell shoes. The manufacturer of securities, however, only starts this portion of his productive machinery to running when he needs money to build a new line, or a new mill, or to reduce grades or excavate tunnels in order to reduce the cost of train movement. His business is to transport passengers and freight, or to make pig iron or cotton cloth. The raising of new capital by the sale of bonds or stocks is incidental and contributory to his main business. It is difficult to imagine a situation where it will be advantageous for a corporation, unless its own stockholders are able to supply its need for new money, to offer its securities directly to the public.

The conclusion, from the standpoint of the investor's interest, is plain. Whenever the Investment Banker will buy, the corporation with bonds for sale will sell them to the Investment Banker. Only when the banker will not purchase, or, as shown above, when the stockholders of the company desiring to raise new capital are willing to add to their investment, will any other method than sale to the investment banker be adopted. If, now, we find that the Investment Banker will buy only the best bonds for resale to his clients, it is a safe conclusion that if the investor wishes good securities, he can rely upon getting them nowhere else than from the bankers whose business it is to select such securities and to sell them.

A moment's consideration of the case will suffice to show that the success of the Investment Banker depends absolutely and entirely upon the quality of the bonds which he offers for sale. He expects his business to be permanent with every client. When a man has saved \$1,000 and purchased a bond, it is a reasonable presumption, from the banker's standpoint, that he will repeat the operation many times, and the banker intends that, so far as possible, he shall supply the investments for the succeeding thousands also. Again, if the banker sells a bond maturing in ten or twenty years he has a record of that sale, and when the bond is paid off, he expects to be on hand with a new bond to take the place of the old one. He aims to cultivate, therefore, by every means in his power, the good-will of his customer. The number of investors, considered in relation to the total population, is small. Competition for the money is very keen. When once a prospect has been converted into a customer, the banker has the strongest possible motives of self-interest to keep him for a permanent customer.

The basis of the customer's good-will, the foundation upon which a large security business must be erected, is the high quality, the impregnable security, of the bonds which the house offers for sale. In his literature, in his advertisements, and through his salesmen, the banker lays strenuous emphasis upon the safety of his wares. He recommends

them to his customers. Usually he has bought them for himself before he offers them for sale. His constant endeavor is to protect his customers against loss. He will carry this solicitude for the customer's good-will so far, in some cases, as to repurchase bonds concerning whose value questions may have been raised, or whose reputation has been blown upon. He has been known to undertake, at his own risk, the work of reorganizing bankrupt companies whose bonds have passed through his hands, so that they may be started anew without loss to the creditors.

A man in such a business cannot afford to recommend to his customers bonds concerning which there may be any question. To depart from this rule would mean the ultimate destruction of his business. He might, as some bankers have done, sell a large amount of doubtful bonds or stocks during a period of business prosperity when all enterprises, both bad and good, were making money. He might trade upon the confidence of his clients and temporarily enrich himself at their expense. When a business depression overtook those shaky enterprises, however, they would go down in ruin, and with them would go the good-will of the banker's business.

We arrive, then, at this conclusion: Since it is to the interest of corporations having bonds for sale to sell them through investment bankers, and since it is to the interest of the investment banker to purchase only safe bonds, it follows that safe bonds of new companies, those which are offered at attractive prices, can be purchased to best advantage through the investment banker.

JUDGMENT

BY RICHARD KIRK

IF on the weaver's loom I break,
And in his pattern have no place,
Shall I be chidden for her sake
Who spun me weaklier than my race?
And cast upon the weaving-floor,
Shall this repay another's debt?
Will he who sees behind, before,
The son condemn, the sire forget?
And if the master of the loom
Declare these worthy of their hire,
Shall I, though gulfed in darkest doom,
Not seek and find my heart's desire?



MRS. BLITHERS'S IDEA

"Yes, Mr. Blithers," said Mrs. Blithers impressively, after she had returned from the meeting of the Saturday Afternoon League; "it is coming just as sure as that to-morrow morning is coming, and don't you forget it. A woman's intuitions speak more truly than all man's vaunted logic and reason, and I know because I feel that the day is not far off when we women will have the vote."

"All right, my dear," said Blithers, from behind the stock-market reports. "How will you have it, plain or with cream and sugar?"

"Oh, laugh away—laugh away," smiled Mrs. Blithers. "We don't mind, because we know we'll show you. When we get into power down at Washington, there will be a complete house-cleaning that'll make you men sit up and take notice. We need it, goodness knows! We'll get the cobwebs out of the Departments. We'll have gum on the postage-stamps with some stick to it. We'll turn a few things upside-down when we get in charge of the Treasury. Everything will be as spick and span under our administration as a brand-new house."

"Guess you will, Maria, guess you will," said Blithers. "I have n't a doubt you'll clean out the Treasury inside of six months."

"We'll have clean money for one thing," said Mrs. Blithers.

"I'll bet you will," said Blithers. "Every dollar bill will be starched and ironed like a spandy new collar, and as for the specie—my, how the half-dollars and quarters and dimes will shine after your silver-polishers have had a whack at them!"

"All right, grin away, Mr. Blithers," said Mrs. Blithers. "But just the same we won't have any such disgraceful goings on down there at Washington as are now the customary thing. No, sirree!

Walnuts and Wine

We women may not know some things, but we'll have some sense of business honor."

"Do you mean to tell me we have no sense of business honor in public life now?" demanded Mr. Blithers.

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Blithers, with a superior smile, "facts speak for themselves. Do you consider this business-like? This paper says that seven thousand bills were presented to Congress in the first nine daily sessions. I believe this paper is reliable."

"Perfectly," said Blithers; "but what of it? Suppose twenty thousand bills were presented in that time?"

"What of it? What of it?" cried Mrs. Blithers. "You surprise me, even if you are a man. Do you think it business-like to have that number of bills, and all in nine days, too?"

Blithers scratched his head in perplexity.

"How would you women stop it?" he demanded.

"How would we stop it?" said Mrs. Blithers scornfully. "Why, we would n't have any bills at all. We'd pay cash as we went along."

Horace Dodd Gastit

THE PACE THAT KILLS.

By Terrell Love Holliday

By dissipation killed,
He lay there 'neath the pall—
The moth that met his death
While at a camphor ball.

THE MULE WAS UNINJURED

Senator John Sharp Williams, whose supply of ducky stories seems inexhaustible, tells this new one:

"I was proceeding leisurely along a Georgia road on foot one day, when I met a conveyance drawn by a mule and containing a number of negro field-hands. The driver, a ducky of about twenty, was endeavoring to induce the mule to increase its speed, when suddenly the animal let fly with his heels and dealt him such a kick on the head that he was stretched on the ground in a twinkling. He lay rubbing his woolly pate where the mule had kicked him.

"Is he hurt?" I asked anxiously of an older negro, who had jumped from the conveyance and was standing over the prostrate driver.

"No, boss," was the older man's reply; "dat mule walk kind o' tendah for a day or two, but he ain't hurt."

E. T.

Walnuts and Wine

AT YULE TIME

By Charles H. La Tourette

It's
now the
time for
Christmas trees,
mistletoe, and holly;
sleigh-bells ringing o'er
the breeze, and everybody
jolly; the children all will eat
their fill of turkey, sauce, and
candy, and Mother will be sure to
have the paregoric handy; relatives and
friends will come to pay their annual
visit;
and
swear
by all
the
saints
above
that
everything's exquisite;
gifts to make to
every one, and
that's the very reason
I save the ones they
give to me; then give
them back next season.

A SALUTE RETURNED

It was the last music lesson before the Christmas holidays, and the children had been thinking more about the coming festivities than about their studies, so it had been rather unsatisfactory.

"Well, children," said the supervisor, as he was about to leave, "I wish you all a merry Christmas, and I hope that when you return after the holidays, you will have more music in your heads than you have to-day."

Without a moment's hesitation, came the reply from forty little urchins, "The same to you, Mr. Browning."

Alice Lilley

Walnuts and Wine

THE MINISTER'S USEFULNESS

Among the members of a fashionable country club of Washington are a doctor and a minister, who delight in the exchange of repartee touching their respective professions.

As they met one day, the minister observed that he was "going to read to old Cunningham," adding (as he was aware that the old man was a patient of his friend, the doctor), "Is he much worse?"

With the gravest of expressions, the physician replied:

"He needs your help more than mine."

Off his guard, the minister exclaimed anxiously: "Poor fellow! Is it as bad as that?"

"Yes; he is suffering from insomnia."

Taylor Edwards

SHE LEARNED THE LESSON

A Baltimore lawyer had an office-boy who was given to telling in other offices what happened in that of his chief. The lawyer found it necessary to discharge him, but, thinking to keep him from a similar fault in the future, he counselled the boy wisely on his departure.

"Willie, you must never hear anything that is said in the office," he said. "Do what you are told to do, but turn a deaf ear to conversation that does not include you."

A happy inspiration! He would see that the stenographer learned the same lesson in passing, so, turning to her, he said:

"Miss Brown, did you hear what I said to Willie?"

"No, sir," she returned promptly.

Marie Phelan

THE LIMIT

By I. F. Ferris

We've had denatured alcohol, deodorized benzine;

'Most everything's de-something, as can readily be seen.

And with increased cost of living, we confess to dread misgiving

Lest this year add unto our list deturkeyized Thanksgiving.

PREHISTORIC

The rebellious angels had just been cast out of heaven. In the swift downward flight Lucifer overtook Beelzebub.

"What's troubling you, Bub?" he called.

"An old problem," answered the future foul fiend, between somersaults: "Where are we going this fall?"

J. T.

Walnuts and Wine

*He won't be happy
till he gets it!*



"All rights secured."

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Walnuts and Wine

UNEXPECTED CANDOR

In court-martial trials in the United States Army the attorneys are selected from among the officers at the post, regardless of their lack of legal training or their inability to handle a case.

One young officer, a surgeon, whose ignorance was bliss so far as the law was concerned, found himself appointed "counsel for the defense" at his new post, and when he entered the court his only legal knowledge was that he had a right to "object" to the tactics of the other side. Accordingly, when one of his witnesses began to be cross-questioned, he sprang to his feet and shouted in a voice of thunder:

"I object!"

"On what grounds?" demanded the prosecuting attorney.

"On what grounds?" echoed the surgeon. "On mighty good grounds. Why, if my witness tells the truth when he answers that question, it will ruin my case!"

A. H.

WHEN I WAS LITTLE

*By Helen Cowles**

When I was little, 'way last year
(I think about it now because
It really seems so awful queer),
I thought there was a Santa Claus!
I used to think that he could come
Right down our chimney with his pack!
I thought he brought my sled and drum,
And then that he went climbing back!
Why, things was diff'rent then, because
I thought there was a Santa Claus.

When I was little, 'way last year,
I used to be so awful good!
I thought if I was bad he'd hear
About it; just as if he could!
But now when Mother says to us,
"Be careful! What 'll Santa think?
It's only bad boys make a fuss!"
Why, me 'n' Bud we laugh and wink.
It used to scare us once because
We thought there was a Santa Claus.

*Miss Helen Cowles' clever verses entitled "Alexander Jones," which appeared in the November LIPPINCOTT'S, were wrongfully attributed to another author.

Walnuts and Wine

NABISCO Sugar Wafers

These delightful dessert confections rightly have a place in every holiday repast. Their fragile goodness and delicate sweetness never fail to please. Their varying flavors comport with any dessert, with ices, fruits or beverages.

In ten cent tins

Also in twenty-five cent tins

CHOCOLATE TOKENS—Another dessert confection, with an outer covering of rich chocolate.

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COMPANY**



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When I was little, 'way last year,
We used to sit up late that night,
And Mother 'd say, "Now if you hear
The sleigh-bells, shut your eyes up tight!"
But now there's only little Mame
To hear those stories once again;
With me 'n' Bud it's not the same,
'Cause we are almost grown-up men.
We used to listen once because
We thought there was a Santa Claus.

When I was little, 'way last year,
I used to dream about the toys
He'd bring, and then I seemed to hear
His reindeer, and a slidy noise.
Why, don't tell Bud—but—even yet
Sometimes—when it's all dark—and late—
I guess it must be I forget
That Santa story is n't straight.
I *play* I'm not grown-up, because
I 'most believe in Santa Claus!

BY WAY OF CONTRAST

Patron in restaurant (who has waited fifteen minutes for his soup): "Waiter, have you ever been to the Zoo?"

Waiter: "No, sir."

Patron: "Well, you ought to go. You'd enjoy watching the tortoises whizz past."

Kent Packard

A PECULIAR COW

The farmers at the cross-roads store had been praising their individual milkers, when Jake spoke up:

"Fellows, you don't have to believe it, but I've got a heifer that has been giving milk for a year, and she's never had a calf. She's just like her mammy was. Her mammy never had a calf, either."

Hugh Brassell

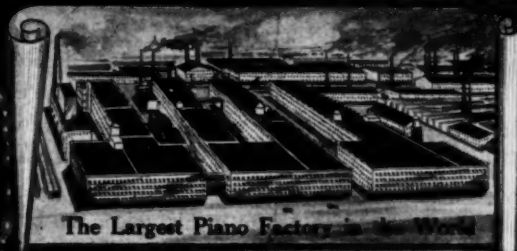
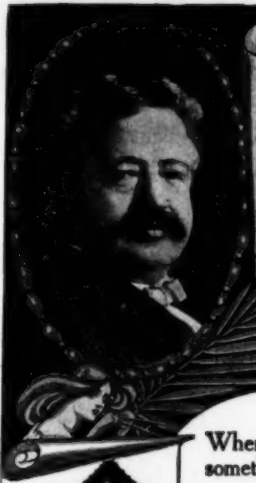
MONEY WANTED

"I tell you I must have some money," roared the King of Maritania, who was in sore financial straits. "Somebody must cough up some."

"Alas," sighed the guardian of the treasury, who was formerly the court jester, "all our coffers are empty."

M. L. Haycard

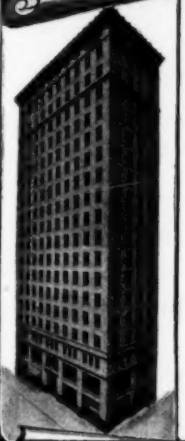
Walnuts and Wine



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Man
and the
Factories

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Walnuts and Wine

THE BENCH'S DISTINCTION

A long-winded attorney was arguing a technical case before one of the judges of the superior court in a Western State. He had rambled on in such a desultory way that it became very difficult to follow his line of thought, and the judge had just yawned very suggestively.

With just a trace of sarcasm in his voice, the tiresome attorney ventured to observe, "I sincerely trust that I am not unduly trespassing on the time of this court."

"My friend," returned his honor, "there is a considerable difference between trespassing on time and encroaching upon eternity."

Edwin Tarrisse

STUNG

"You look worried, old man. What's wrong?"

"I was stung by an adder this afternoon."

"Heavens! How did that happen?"

"The bank clerk told me that my account was overdrawn."

M. L. Hayward

RAYMOND HITCHCOCK'S ILLUSTRATION

"In Switzerland, this summer," said a Bostonian, "I heard Raymond Hitchcock describe the stringent police regulations of Berlin."

"Mr. Hitchcock, by way of illustration, concluded with a little story.

" 'Rauss and Meyer met one morning in the Park.

" ' 'Have you heard,' says Rauss, 'the sad news about Wrenn?'

" ' 'No,' says Meyer; 'what is it?'

" ' 'Well, poor Wrenn went boating yesterday, the boat cap-sized, and he was drowned. The water was ten feet deep.'

" ' 'But could n't he swim?'

" ' 'Swim? Don't you know that all persons are strictly forbidden by the police to swim in the river?'

L. F. Clarke

THE TYE THAT BINDS

Bess: "What do you think? Her aunt brought Tess only a string of cheap beads from Europe."

Jess: "Well, what more could she expect from a close relation?"

Justin Tyme

THE DAIRYMAID'S DEFINITION

Flattery is the milk of human kindness turned into butter.

L. T. H.



The Bread and Butter Question

TO a widowed mother with children to support, the future looks a little brighter, if there comes to her each month, as the result of her husband's foresight, a monthly income.

That is just what the Guaranteed Low Cost Monthly Income Policy of The TRAVELERS INSURANCE COMPANY does. It guarantees a specified income payable every month for life. It cannot be diverted from the purpose for which it was taken out. It cannot be lost by the inexperience or misconduct of others, nor diminished by taxes or attorney's fees.

The TRAVELERS acts as a Trustee without charge and assumes all risks. The policy will not lapse if you become unable to pay the premiums in consequence of total and permanent disability from accident or disease.

This policy yields the wife and children a bread and butter income and now and then a little cake and cream. It is worth looking into, even though you already carry some insurance. Send coupon for particulars.



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Please send me particulars regarding the Guaranteed Low Cost Monthly Income Policy

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WHERE THE DIFFICULTY LAY

A clergyman, who has since attained prominence in Philadelphia, was in his earlier years called from a village church.

When one of the deacons expressed grief at his going, the good man observed:

"No doubt you will get a better minister to take my place."

The deacon sighed. "That's just the trouble," he said.
"Every preacher lately is worse than the last." T.

THE PROUD TURK

By Charles Irvin Junkin

So proud you were, and haughty,
That I thought you really naughty,
Long ago;
You despised the ducks and chickens,
And you thumped them like the dickens,
Which was low!

But perhaps I was mistaken,
And my judgment is quite shaken,
And I roar,
When I see you plucked and roasted,
You are really all you boasted
And some more.

You were proud of feathers wavy,
But you never mentioned gravy
In the plate!
And I thought that you were bluffing!
But you never mentioned stuffing!!
Oh! you're great!!!

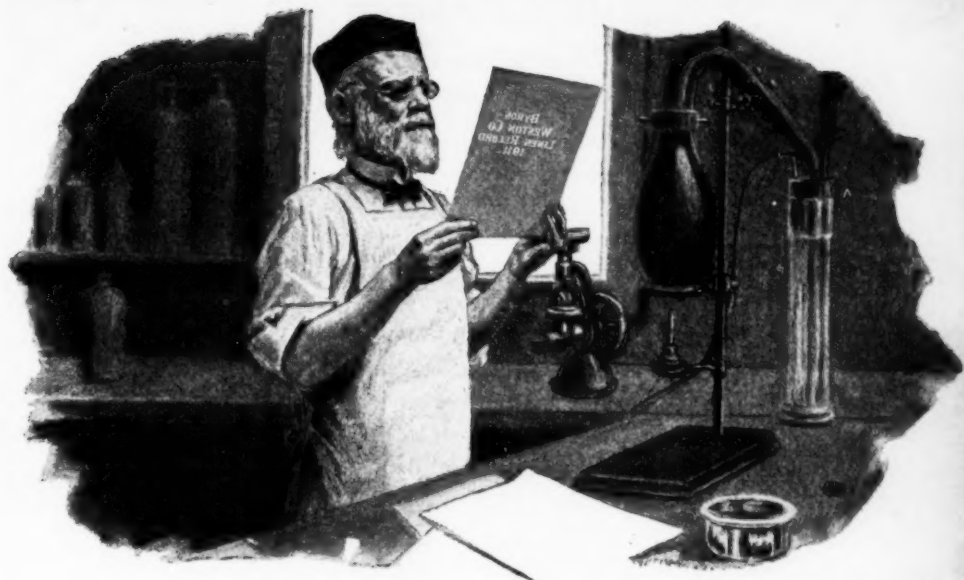
WHICH DREW?

In one of Philadelphia's theatres John and Sydney Drew were booked to appear with different companies, the former coming in the fall, and the latter later in the season. The manager of the theatre visited New York one day and was accosted by a colleague as follows:

"I see you have played both the Drews in your theatre. Which was the better attraction?"

"Well," replied the manager, "that's pretty easy. John Drew, but Sydney did n't." Robert Grau

Walnuts and Wine



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THE MISTLETOE-BOUGH

By Mazie V. Caruthers

Oh, the mistletoe-bough is all well enough
With its chance for a sly osculation,
Since a damsel must pay, if she 's caught underneath,
The price of her perilous station.
If a kiss can't be given without an excuse,
Then the mistletoe-bough is indeed of some use!

But happy am I, of lovers most blest,
Who need no such pretense as this,
But may take any time from my sweetheart's red lips
That delectable something—a kiss!
The mistletoe plant a perennial must be
To serve as a kissing criterion for me!

Apple-blossoms in spring and field-flowers sweet
Will do just as well; the blushing red rose
Makes a perfumed retreat; 't was beneath some white 'mums
I summoned up courage enough to propose!
So the mistletoe-bough for others may do,
But I think I 'm beyond its assistance, don't you?

A REAL DELICACY

A New York clubman who prides himself on his knowledge of things epicurean was much interested in an item he discovered in the menu laid before him on the occasion of his visit to a town of the Middle West. The item was "green bluefish."

"Waiter," demanded the New Yorker, "what sort of bluefish are green bluefish?"

"Fresh, sir," quickly responded the servitor. "Right from the water."

"How dare you try to impose upon me?" continued the clubman. "You know well enough that bluefish are not taken at this season."

Whereupon the waiter picked up the menu and gave it a careful scrutiny, as if by that action he would solve the mystery. Then, with an air of one suddenly enlightened, he added:

"Oh, *that*, sir? That 's hothouse bluefish."

Taylor Edwards

Old Hampshire Bond

[4]

RARE wine from a tin cup would lose its charm. Your most earnest business argument lacks in power when written on poor paper.

Old Hampshire Bond is good business stationery. We do not say it's the best. We say it is good and request you to pass comparative judgment upon

**Old
Hampshire
Bond**

and *all* others.

[5]

ISN'T it strange, though, how many bond papers have been born "old?" Just because of the standard set by Old Hampshire Bond we now find offered by both printer and maker, stationery marked "Old THIS Bond" "Old THAT Bond" "Old SOME-OTHER Bond" and many of the titles sound like or suggest the real HAMPSHIRE.

You know why all this is done and you will act accordingly.

Buy the real standard to get the best and that of the best repute.



[6]

YOU should see the Old Hampshire Bond Book of Specimens. It shows a wide selection of letterheads and business forms. One style of printing, lithographing or engraving, on white or one of the fourteen colors of Old Hampshire Bond, is sure to express exactly the feeling-tone you desire for your stationery.

*Hampshire
Paper Company*

*South Hadley Falls
Massachusetts*

*The only paper makers in the
world making bond paper
exclusively.*

Walnuts and Wine

THE GOVERNMENT'S ODDS

"Ollie" James, the big Representative from Kentucky, tells of an Irishman in the West who had intended to take up a homestead claim, but, not knowing how to go about it, sought information from a friend.

"Malachi," he said, "you know all about this law. Tell me what I am to do."

"Well," said the other, "I don't remember the exact wording of the law, but I can give you the meaning of it. It's this: The government is willin' to bet you one hundred and sixty acres of land against fourteen dollars that you can't live on it five years without starving to death."

Fenimore Martin

AN EXTENSION OF CREDIT

A young country merchant who had something of a reputation for close figuring was especially attentive to the village schoolma'am. The young woman had a sweet tooth and was not at all retiring about making the fact known. Accordingly, she hinted to her admirer that a box of chocolates would be greatly appreciated on the occasion of his next visit. Later the suggestion was repeated and again duly heeded. The third time the subject was broached, however, the dispenser of sweets turned a deaf ear to the entreaty.

"I don't know about takin' that girl any more candy," he confided to a companion next day. "She's owin' me sixty cents for chocolates already."

Edward A. Barney

WHENCE DERIVED

Professor: "Mr. Bilton, you will kindly outline briefly the fundamental law against bigamy."

Bilton: "Yes 'r. You'll find it in the Bible. It says no man can serve two masters."

George Frederick Wilson

HE DID IT

He: "If I should kiss you, what would happen?"

She: "I should call Father."

He: "Then, I won't do it."

She: "But Father's in Europe."

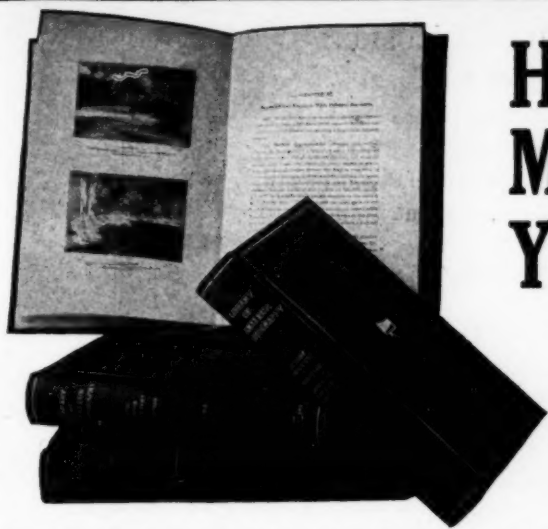
William Sanford

ANOTHER COURSE

"Did she celebrate her last birthday abroad?"

"No, she ignored it."

W. Bob Holland



How to Make Money With Your Camera!

Here are books you'll surely want to read! For they show how YOU can make your camera pay its way and give you a good income. There is no limit to what you can earn. What others have done you can do. Right here in these

four books is the training, the ideas and the suggestions that will enable you to make photographs for book, magazine and newspaper publishers.

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Walnuts and Wine

A VEILED ALLUSION

By N. L.

When Salome danced before the king
'Tis said that she never wore a thing
That could cause her royal swain to rail,
So she did n't dance without avail.

MATHEMATICAL

How to learn the Rule of Three: Live with your wife, your
mother, and your mother-in-law.

La Touche Hancock

A SURE THING

Freddy: "Is Dolly Dimple a foreigner?"

Teddy: "Yes; she's a Laplander."

William Sanford

POST-GRADUATE STUDIES

Nelse had applied to his mistress for a holiday Friday afternoon, to attend a meeting of the colored School Board.

"You on the School Board, Nelse!" she exclaimed. "How on earth does that happen? I thought you did n't know how to read and write."

"Dat's right, Miss Lucy, I don't," he replied earnestly; "but my teacher said dem was de only two things she could n't learn me."

A. H.

MOTHERLY ADMONITION

A New York woman of great beauty called one day upon a friend, bringing with her her eleven-year-old daughter, who gives promise of becoming as great a beauty as her mother.

It chanced that the callers were shown into a room where the friend had been receiving a milliner, and there were several beautiful hats lying about. During the conversation the little girl amused herself by examining the milliner's creations. Of the number that she tried on, she seemed particularly pleased with a large black affair which set off her light hair charmingly. Turning to her mother, the little girl said:

"I look just like you now, Mother, don't I?"

"'Sh!" cautioned the mother, with uplifted finger. "Don't be vain, dear."

Howard Morse

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CHRISTMAS FOREHANDNESS

By Mazie V. Caruthers

"T is now that trying time of year
When memory harks back
To bargains seen last summer, which
We *might* have bought, alack!
What strength we 'd save, what lots of coin,
How full contentment's cup,
To sit at home, one's presents bought,
And calmly tie them up!



WOODROW WILSON AS LEXICOGRAPHER

The American public speaker is not "heckled" by an audience as is his British cousin on the other side of the Atlantic, but the unexpected question is occasionally to be reckoned with. At such a moment ready wit is all that can save the day. Personal integrity, intellectual attainments, and a righteous cause avail little or nothing.

Governor Woodrow Wilson is a past master of repartee, as he proved a score of times during his recent "stumping" tour, though never more effectively than in the South Jersey hamlet of Sea Isle. He had just referred to himself as "a political optimist" when some one called out, "And what 's that?"

Instantly came the answer: "A political optimist, my friend, is a fellow who can make sweet, pink lemonade out of the bitter yellow fruit which his opponents hand him."

On election day Sea Isle went strong for Wilson.

Warwick James Price



SEVERING OLD TIES

Willie was sent out by his mother to the woodshed to saw and split some stove-wood out of a pile of old railroad ties.

Going outdoors shortly after, she found the youth sitting on the saw-horse with his head bowed down in his hands. She asked her hopeful why he did n't keep at his work.

"My dear mother," he replied with much feeling, "I find it so hard, so very hard, to sever old ties."

Edwin Tarriase



THE man who has control of his temper would find this a pleasant world if he did not have to come in contact with people who cannot control theirs.

William J. Burtacher

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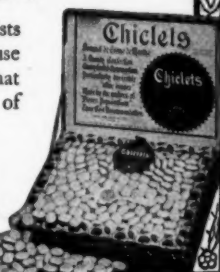
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Walnuts and Wine

A GREAT READER

A literary person in England was talking literature to an American visitor.

"Do you read much?" he inquired.

"Oh, a great deal," was the confident and prompt reply.

"What, for example?"

"A Sunday newspaper, regularly."

"No more than that?" in a disappointed tone.

"No more than that?" exclaimed the visitor. "Gee, man, I guess you never saw one of our Sunday newspapers, did you?"

W. J. Lampton

TESTS

"What makes you think that you really love me?" she said.

He thought for a moment before he replied, and then he said:

"I am willing to button you up your back all the rest of your life."

"That is something, but is it all?"

"I am willing to let our house be run by strangers, and that you should ever remain in entire ignorance of its management."

"Rather good. Anything else?"

"I am willing that we should have no children, so that you will be able to go to Europe whenever you want to, entertain your friends, and not be tied down."

"Good! And is that all?"

"Is this not enough?"

And she doubtfully replied:

"I suppose it ought to be, but I was in hopes that you would say you were willing to have me wear anything I pleased all the rest of my life, no matter how really ridiculous it was."

Thomas L. Masson

OPTIMISM

Some members of a literary club were talking shop one day when a poet chanced to remark:

"I understand that ninety-nine out of every hundred stories are declined by the magazines."

"If that's the case," replied a young author, "then I must be about due, for I've had nearly that many turned down."

J. J. O'Connell

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William J. Burtscher

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are only explained by the exclusive patented features and the **high-grade** material and superb workmanship that enter into their construction.

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Walnuts and Wine

AN ABSENT-MINDED ARTIST

A scatter-brained New York artist, with the well-known "temperament," recently wrote a letter that surpassed any of her past deeds yet recounted by her friends. It began:

MY DEAR MRS. PRICE:

I have been referred to your house by Miss Mason as a good place to board. I will arrive there Wednesday night, to stay two weeks. Please reserve for me a front room to use as a studio. Remove all pictures and furniture, except a single bed, take up the carpet, and have the walls painted a soft gray.

At this point she was interrupted by a friend who extended to her an invitation in another direction, which she speedily decided to accept. Filled with regret at the idea of putting her landlady to so much trouble for nothing, she added the following postscript and mailed the letter with a special delivery stamp:

P. S. I have decided not to come. You need n't bother to fix the room.

A. H.

ONLY A TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR, BUT—

The druggist in a small town died, and his widow continued the business. A month later she arranged the window display so that it was very attractive. That week the town paper contained this item of news:

Mr. Arthur Edwards, a prominent druggist of Higginsville, took in the sights of our city yesterday. He was very much interested in our druggist's attractive widow.

T. C. McConnell

PAPA'S PAST

Little Helen's mamma was discussing the drink question with a visitor, and the child listened gravely to the conversation.

"Papa used to drink," she volunteered suddenly.

The visitor turned her head to conceal a smile, and Mama frowned and shook her head at the little one.

"Well, then," demanded Helen, "what was it he used to do?"

W. B. Kerr

A BARRICADE

By Frank H. Williams

When Polly puts the pillow 'twixt
Herself and ardent Sam,
She knows it is no barrier—
'Tis but a pillow-sham!

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Walnuts and Wine

TIMELY ANSWERS

"Do you remember how hungry I was at seven-thirty last night while we were at the picnic?"

"I should say I do."

"Do you know how I appeased my hunger in a half-hour?"

"No; what did you do?"

"Eight a clock."

"That's nothing. Do you remember how unlucky I was at the raffle at twelve-thirty?"

"I certainly do."

"Well, I was n't so unlucky a half-hour later."

"No? I'm glad to know that. What did you win?"

"One a clock."

W. Dayton Wegefarth

A CASE OF ECONOMY

Mrs. Johnson, the wife of the new minister in a New England town, asked a neighboring farmer's boy to bring her a dozen eggs and a roasting chicken when he brought the vegetables the next day. The boy appeared promptly, but in his basket were only eleven eggs. "Ma says she will send over the other egg after a while," he explained.

"But what about the chicken?" Mrs. Johnson asked. "That does not seem to be here either."

"She will send that too," was the answer.

"But," complained Mrs. Johnson, "I want to cook the chicken for dinner. Why did n't you bring it over with you this time?"

"Because," replied the boy, "the hen is n't killed yet. You see, Ma's waitin' till she lays the other egg."

Nellie Poyntz Ferry

NOT STRANGE

Katherine, worn and thin from overstudy, had come to Colorado to visit friends and recuperate. The change was proving very beneficial, and a couple of weeks after her arrival Mrs. Brown, her hostess, at dinner one evening, remarked:

"Have you noticed how Katherine's face is filling out?"

"Huh," said little Bobbie, who had observed the guest's excellent appetite, "it's no wonder—with what she puts into it."

Terrell Love Holliday

A SCRAP of history—the bout between David and Goliath.

H. Susman

Walnuts and Wine

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Indoor sea bathing in a magnificent pool, which rivals in splendor of appointment the baths of Ancient Rome, is one of the most enjoyable and beneficial features of The Chamberlin. So airy and light is this

sea pool, that bathing in it is next to bathing outdoors. There is a constantly changing supply of pure, fresh, filtered sea water of an agreeable temperature.

There are medical and tonic baths, also—of every kind and description—in charge of an expert.

By day, there are military and naval manoeuvres, trips through surrounding historic country, golf, tennis, boating, etc. In the evenings, there is dancing for those who wish it.

The cuisine is perfect—real Southern cooking—fresh oysters and sea food from nearby waters—fresh vegetables from our own gardens. Many count the cuisine of The Chamberlin as its first attraction—the one that lingers longest and fondest in memory.

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TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.

Walnuts and Wine

A MIRACLE

Dot, a two-year-old girl, likes to gather eggs. One day she went to the hennery, but the hen refused to leave the nest. Securing a number of green apples, she proceeded to throw them one by one at the stubborn fowl. At last one struck the hen, which flew off the nest with a loud cackle. Dot ran to the nest to find the egg. To her surprise, she found only the green apple. Catching it up, she ran to her mother, exclaiming in great excitement, "Oh! Mamma, Mamma, the hen went 'la! la! la!' and laid an apple."

Edna L. Zink

THE REFORMATION OF 'RASTUS

The Honorable Luke Lee, the youngest Senator of all, tells of the case of a shiftless colored boy in Alabama, who, after being caught in a number of petty delinquencies, was at last sentenced to a short term in the penitentiary, where he was set to learn a trade. On the day of his return home he met a friendly white acquaintance, who asked:

"Well, what did they put you at in the prison, 'Rastus?'"

"Dey started in to make an honest boy out'n me, sah."

"That's good, 'Rastus. I hope they succeeded."

"Dey did, sah."

"And how did they teach you to be honest?'"

"Dey put me in de shoe-shop, sah, nailin' pasteboard soles onto de shoes, sah."

Elgin Burroughs

HIS RELIGION FORBIDS

Mr. A. J. Person, who travels for a large New York wholesale house, tells of a rather amusing incident which he recently witnessed while on the road between New York and Boston.

"The train was pretty well crowded," says Mr. Person, "and in the car where I was nearly every seat was occupied. Directly in front of me sat a rather fleshy man who managed, with his luggage, to fill the entire seat.

"Just as we were leaving New Haven, a man who was evidently in search of a seat stopped in the aisle opposite our stout friend and gazed at him somewhat disgustedly.

"'Well,' growled the corpulent one, 'what are you going to do, eat me?'"

"'Ah, no,' replied the other; 'that I could not do: I am a Hebrew.'"

C. H. Hitch

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On retiring, comb the hair out straight all around, then begin at the side and make a parting, gently rubbing Cuticura ointment into the parting with a bit of soft flannel held over the end of the finger. Anoint additional partings about half an inch apart until the whole scalp has been treated, the purpose being to get the ointment on the scalp skin rather than on the hair.

The next morning, shampoo with Cuticura soap and hot water. Shampoos alone may be used as often as agreeable, but for women's hair once or twice a month is generally sufficient for this *special treatment*. Men may apply Cuticura ointment as they would a pomade or in any other convenient way, preferably at night, as often as necessary to keep the scalp clean and the hair from falling, but may shampoo lightly with Cuticura soap every morning, when making the toilet.

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To please my daughter dear,
I've thirty hundred for it too,"
Said Papa Vanderveer.
"I've thought of every blessed thing,
From furs to lingerie,
But nothing that she hasn't got
Suggests itself to me."

He bought a magazine, the ads
With interest he eyed,
"A motor-car, the very thing!"
Delightedly he cried.
So when the bells of Christmas pealed
Across the frozen drifts,
One maiden found an auto-car
Among her Christmas gifts.

THE CAR IN COLD WEATHER

By Churchill Williams

THE number of those who lay up their cars for the winter is now few. The automobile has become an all-year-around vehicle. If there is not so much pleasure to be had from it in the winter as in the summer, enough remains to make its use well worth while. The man who puts away his car with the first winter storm is almost sure to regret it, again and again, on those sunshiny days when there is sufficient cold to keep the road-bed firm, the travel of iron-tired vehicles has perhaps worn down the worst of the ruts, if any, and the bracing air invites a run into the country. Moreover, except for those who can afford to spend for almost whatever they fancy, the use of the car during the winter does not imply the possession of a limousine body. The perfect protection from weather that such a body alone affords

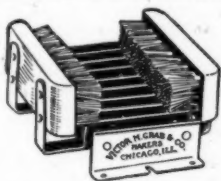
is, of course, justification for its adoption, if within one's reach, and its employment is steadily increasing. But the limousine is expensive, not only because of its greater first cost, but also because of the heavier charges for upkeep entailed by its weight and the essential accompaniment of a chauffeur. The man who drives and probably also looks after the general welfare and cleaning of his car must, therefore, be content with a regular touring or roadster body. During cold or inclement weather he must rely for the protection of his passengers and himself upon the folding water-proof top and the windshield with which most cars are regularly equipped, and upon the front doors now attached to many of them. Furthermore, it should be said right here that, if proper attention be given to the selection of a durable

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It automatically registers the deposit of each coin. Capacity, \$30.00. Impossible to extract any money until \$5.00 or a multiple thereof in dimes is deposited—when bank automatically opens. Made of solid steel and iron, oxidized copper finish. Size, $2\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ inches; weight, 14 ounces. **Price, \$1.00**, prepaid in U. S.

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